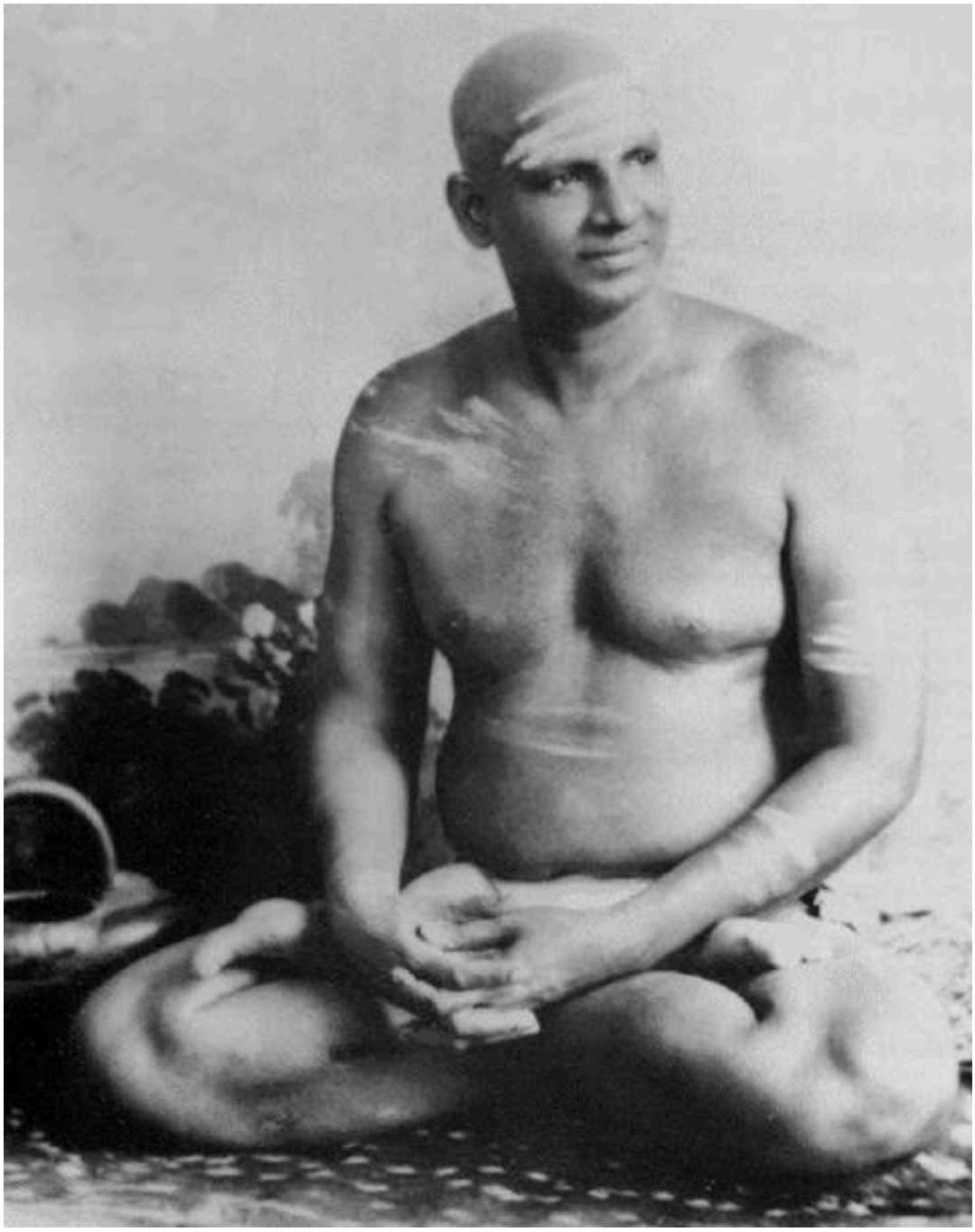

REVELATION OF THE EVER-REVEALED

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

A DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY PUBLICATION

REVELATION OF

THE EVER-REVEALED

[AN EXPOSITIONOF THESRUTI-SARA-SAMUDDHARANAM OF SAGE TOTAKACHARYA, WITH TRANSLATION, FREE RENDERING AND COMMENTARY OF THE VERSES]

SRI SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Students of the Vedanta are generally familiar with such introductions to the subject as the Vaasudevamanana, Vedanta Paribhasha and the Panchadasi, paving the way to a study of the standard texts, the Prasthanatraya, namely, the Upanishads, the Brahma-Sutras and the Bhagavadgita. But few would be acquainted with the profound introductory work on the subject of the Vedanta philosophy known as the Sruti-sara-samuddharanam, ascribed to Totakacharya, a direct disciple of Acharya Sankara.

The present exposition of this novel work is sure to be received by the student world as a welcome treat, and a valuable addition to the existing literature on introductions to Vedanta.

28th November, -1977 - THE DIVINE LIFE SOCIETY

FOREWORDS

Salutations to the Supreme Reality transcending the mind and senses. We adore that Universal Essence that pervades everywhere, manifests as everything and which indwells all beings as the subtlest of the subtle Antaryami Tattva. Prostrations to the Satguru who reveals the Reality to the devout disciple dedicated to the quest after the Divine Truth.

I am happy to give this foreword to the present English rendering of the great Totakacharya's Sruti-Sara- Samuddharanam and a very readable commentary upon this admirable work. It is of immense value to sincere spiritual Sadhakas upon the path of Vedanta. Thus they are of practical utility and help to all engaged in living the life spiritual. Sri Swami Brahmananda Sarasvatiji of the Yoga-Vedanta Forest Academy, Shivanandanagar, has rendered a valuable service in making available his notes of his personal study of the original Sanskrit work as well as its Hindi commentary. I congratulate the author and invoke upon him the blessings of Jagadguru Adi Sankara Bhagavat Pada and our worshipful Satguru Swami Sivananda Sarasvatiji Maharaj.

May this book which is a labour of love of the translator and commentator find its way into the hands of every sincere student of the Jnana Marga. I wish the book wide circulation. May God bless Swami Brahmananda Sarasvati as well as all those associated in preparing the manuscript and printing and publishing this present volume. God's Grace be upon the readers of this work. Thou art immortal Atman. Realise this and be free. Hari Om Tat Sat.

Swami Chidananda.

Revered Sri Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj, who, as the author of a veritable magnum opus, 'The Philosophy of Sage Yajnavalkya', is already reputed as an acute thinker on profound philosophical subjects, has now brought to light another vade mecum "Revelation of the Ever Revealed". I regard it as a blessing to have been asked to write a few words of introduction in the context of this valuable work of the Swamiji.

The present publication is a scholarly commentary on a mostly unknown writing attributed to Totakacharya, one of the direct disciples of the great Acharya, Adi-Sankara. The text touches upon the essentials of the Vedanta philosophy, commencing with a description of the characters of the Preceptor and the Disciple, passing through the usual topics of the Vedanta such as the constituents of the individual and the cosmic correlatives of experience and concluding with an enunciation of the nature of the Ultimate Reality and its realisation.

It would be proper and fitting for me to mention here that the author is a saintly person, an elderly Sannyasin, who has been living an austere life of study and meditation for several years in the Ashram at the Headquarters of The Divine Life Society, and respected as an exemplary Sadhaka, an ideal seeker who is fit to be emulated as an example by every earnest searcher of Truth. The Swamiji, in his scholarly exposition of the nature of the traditional Bhashya of ancient times, has left nothing unsaid and has truly embellished the intentions of the text with his thought-provoking and stirring contemplations on the meaning.

Satrarho varnyate yatra, suktaih sutranusaribhih; Svapadani cha varnyante bhashyam bhashyavido vidhu: This is the definition of a Bhashya as known in orthodox circles, which means that a Bhashya is that kind of exposition of a text or an aphorism which not only gives the actual surface meaning of the original, but also appends a note along the lines of the intentions of the original author and an

additional fund of knowledge also is dovetailed into the subject by the sagacity and learning of the commentator. Thus, this work of the revered Swamiji is a Bhashya indeed, which is worth reading several times, by every student of Vedanta. There would be no need for me to go into the content of the work as a whole since the author's own introduction is adequate and self-explanatory.

I commend this book wholeheartedly to the world of seekers for taking it seriously into their daily routine of Svadhyaya or sacred study, as a help in their meditations and spiritual life.

The Divine Life Society, Swami Krishnananda.

Shivanandanagar,

Dated 21st March, 1977

PREFACE

Prostrations at the feet of the Supreme, the Almighty Lord. If I am correct, it was on Guruvar, Thursday in the last week of April 1973, a copy of the book 'Sruti-Sara- Samuddharanam (Totakam)' of Sri Totakacharya, in Sanskrit, with a small commentary in Hindi, by H.H. Sri Swami Vidyananda Giri Maharaj, Mahamandalesvar of the local Kailasa Ashram, was given to me by H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary of The Divine Life Society at its Headquarters. Sri Swamiji Maharaj asked me to study the book carefully. After the first reading, I felt the necessity of some help for a fuller understanding of the verses in the book. For this purpose, I approached Revered Sri Swami Jnananandaji Maharaj, the Head of the Sanskrit Department in the Ashram, who has remarkable scholarship in Sanskrit literature and admirable poetic talents. Swamiji Maharaj readily and gladly agreed to help me. The study of the verses under his able guidance was completed in about four to five weeks. After some days, I myself had another leisurely revision of the book during which the short notes which I had jotted down during the classes under Sri Swami Jnananandaji were expatiated. The manuscript that ensued from this revision, covered more than two hundred foolscap pages. An idea then struck me that it would be useful, if I could get these notes typed. This also was got done, thanks to the selfless service of the co-Sadhakas in the Ashram, One day, when I was talking to Sri Narasimhuluji, who is in charge of the Press in the Ashram, and who was then acting as the Editor of 'The Divine Life' in the place of H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj, the permanent Editor who was out of station for reasons of ill health, he enquired whether I had any article with me for 'The Divine Life' journal. I then suggested these notes of mine on the Sruti-Sara-Samuddharanam for publication as a serial. The Editorial Staff did not then want a serial, as there were

already more than one serial occupying the space of the Journal. It was therefore decided to publish the matter in the form of independent articles under suitable headings. With some slight adjustments in the manuscript to suit the above requirement, it started appearing in 'The Divine Life' from its Issue for October 1974 onwards. The first article was published under the title "The Philosophy of Sri Totakacharya", the second one under the caption "Guru, God and the Absolute", the third under "Who Is a Disciple?", and so on, until the whole manuscript was covered, the last one being the article which appeared in the Issue for May 1976, under the heading "Who Is a Perfected Sage?"

The Divine Life Society is now publishing these articles in a book form under the title "Revelation of the Ever-revealed". Certain additions and subtractions, found necessary for the book form, have been made.

The book is intended for co-seekers treading the spiritual path, especially the Jnanamarga, the path of knowledge. The original text is a continuous whole from the first to the last verse, running without any break. In the present exposition, the subject matter of the treatise has been divided into five sections, and each section into few subsections. A transliteration of the verses is also given in the body of the book, in the serial order, which is followed by their exposition. The verses have uniformly been printed in Italics. Sanskrit words occurring in the body portion have been printed either in Italics, or in Roman type with the first letter in capital like proper nouns. The spelling for transliteration usually adopted in the publications of The Divine Life Society has been followed in this book also.

No English translation or commentary of the Sruti-Sara-Samuddharanam appears to have been published so far, although translations and commentaries are available in Hindi, Malayalam, etc. This treatise, though not widely known, is considered a very

valuable one among the Advaitic texts by spiritual seekers. It is, therefore, hoped the present publication would be helpful to that section of the spiritual seekers who are not as well-versed in Sanskrit as in English.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere and deep feelings of gratitude to H.H. Sri Swami Chidanandaji Maharaj and H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj for their very esteemed and encouraging forewords. I am greatly indebted to Sri Swami Jnanandaji Maharaj who in spite of his heavy other engagements in the Ashram and the disabilities due to his advanced age, was kind enough to spare his valuable time to help me in my study of the text, and also in the approval of the final proofs. I am also thankful to Sri Narasimhuluji, the present Editor, 'The Divine Life', also in charge of the Ashram Press, who is solely responsible for the publication of the book in its present form. My grateful thanks are also due to Sri Swami Vivekanandaji for reading and correcting the proofs in their various stages and Sri Gurucharana Chaitanyaji (now Swami Gurucharanananda) for his loving labour in the skilful composition of the matter in the Intertype machine (at present in the computer) and for patiently carrying out the author's corrections even in the last stages.

While H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj was penning his valuable foreword for the publication, he noted that the direct translation of the verses has been mixed up with the commentaries, and said that the readers would very much miss a direct rendering, immediately after each verse. Therefore, a separate free rendering of the verses has been subsequently prepared and added on in the introductory pages of this book. In this, the translation of the first fifty verses is by H.H. Sri Swami Krishnanandaji Maharaj himself, for which gracious act the author is deeply indebted to His Holiness.

I conclude this short preface with my prostrations at the lotus-feet of Guru Bhagavan, H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, for his ever-flowing grace and compassion.

Swami Brahmananda.

INTRODUCTION

The Absolute which is free of every kind of relationship cannot but remain ever revealed and self-revealed. Everything cognised as other to It, the whole of this relative phenomenal universe of subject and object in the space-time continuum, appears to the senses and the mind some times revealed and at other times veiled. The cogniser of this appearance and disappearance of the universe has necessarily to be beyond the realm of appearance and disappearance, and therefore, eternal and ever revealed. A small cloud formed due to the heat of the sun appears to veil the big sun itself. But really it proclaims the presence of the sun and thus reveals the sun, because its very existence depends on the sun. Even so, this finite universe, a mere phenomenon which has come out of Consciousness, is erroneously thought as veiling the Absolute, but it is really revealing It through the process of appearance and disappearance.

The great Acharya Sankara briefly refers to this fact while commenting on the Bhagavadgita verse XVIII-50. He says: "It is true that the Absolute is unattainable to those who are not initiated into the traditional knowledge by their preceptors, who have not properly grasped the import of Vedanta, whose intellect is completely engrossed in the external sense-objects and who are not trained in the right sources of knowledge. On the other hand, to those who are duly initiated, it is quite impossible to believe in the reality of duality-subject and object-of our external perception, because they perceive no reality other than the Consciousness of the Self. For, the Self is not a thing unknown to anyone at any time. Neither is It a thing to be reached or rejected or acquired. If the Self were to be quite unknown, all understanding intended for the benefit of oneself would have no meaning. It is not possible certainly to think that they are for the benefit of the physical body, the organs and the like which are insentient. Nor is it possible to

think happiness is for happiness' sake. Therefore, just as there is no need for an external evidence for knowing one's own body, so also, there is no need for an external proof to know the Self which is nearer than even the body. Even those who have the knowledge that the Self, being without any form, cannot be known through immediate perception, must admit that since an object of knowledge is apprehended through knowledge, knowledge is quite as immediately known as pleasure or pain. Moreover, it cannot be maintained that knowledge is a thing which one seeks to know. If knowledge were unknown, it would be something which has to be sought after, just as an unknown object of knowledge is sought after. Just as one seeks to reach by knowledge a knowable object like a pot or a cloth, so also one would have to seek to reach knowledge by means of another knowledge. But our experience is otherwise. Therefore, Knowledge is self-revealed, and hence the Knower is also self-revealed. No effort is needed for the Knowledge of the Reality. All effort is directed towards preventing the error of the non-self being regarded as the Self."

This effort is known as spiritual Sadhana and rectification of the error is termed realisation. Sri Totakacharya, a direct disciple of Acharya Sankara, following the footsteps of the great Master, in his Sanskrit poetical work called Sruti-Sara-Samuddharanam, has given the essence of the Vedas, the great secret about the Absolute that lies hidden, as it were, in the great depths of the Sruti.

The Truth-Absolute cannot but be simple, and non-truth is bound to be complicated, disentanglement from which is difficult. Then why is it that Truth-Absolute is not realised easily, by all? The answer is: It is too simple to be understood or grasped by the human intellect. It is simple in the sense that It is the Soul of the intellect itself, and free of all objectivity and subjectivity. This is exactly the reason why we are unable to know It either as the subject or the object. The intellect, the subtlest instrument available to man, can

function only in the relative plane, and it is the only apparatus given to him to attain the Supreme which is beyond its realm, and hence the extreme difficulty experienced in knowing the most simple Truth. If used properly and with clear understanding, the intellect can take us to the borderland of the Great Beyond. And what Sri Totakacharya has given in the present treatise, helps us towards the attainment of this Goal.

Sri Totakacharya was one among the four direct disciples of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada who flourished more than eleven centuries ago. He was also the first pontiff in charge of the Mutt in the Himalayas at Joshimut, one of the four Mutts established by Sri Sankara, the other three being one at Dvaraka in the west coast of India, one at Puri in the east coast, and one at Sringeri in the South in the Karnataka State. Sri Totakacharya was also known as Ananda Giri. Not very much historical is known about the author, for like many of the sages and saints, he has not left for posterity any information about his personal life.

Sri Sankara is considered by his followers as an incarnation of Lord Siva, and tradition says that in order to serve him during his sojourn in this world, many celestials also took birth in their part manifestations. Among them, Ananda Giri is said to be the one-tenth part of the deity, Vayu, the subtle element air. His devotion to his preceptor was unique in that he was concentrating his whole attention in the personal service of his Master. In the eyes of the other co-disciples, he was considered not quite upto the mark in the study of Vedanta. It is said that at Sringeri, the Master used to conduct a daily class on his commentaries on the Brahma-Sutras,, for his disciples. One day, it so happened that when the class was about to start, there were only three disciples present instead of the usual four. Ananda Giri was not seen, for he had gone to the river to wash the Master's clothes. Thereupon, Sri Sankara told the other three: "Please wait a little, Giri will come in a moment". On hearing

this, it is said that Sri Padmapadacharya's face showed signs of astonishment at the Master's waiting for the arrival of the dull-witted Giri who could not follow the subtle arguments in the commentary on the Brahma-Sutras. The Master understood the thoughts that were passing in the mind of Sri Padmapadacharya and decided to destroy his pride, a great stumbling block on the path of the spiritual aspirants, and at the same time, to bless Ananda Giri for his devoted service with omniscience and thus shower his grace on both of them. By his Yogic power, in the mind of Ananda Giri flashed forth all scriptural knowledge, knowledge about Puranas, Logic, Mimamsa, Dharma Sastra, Siksha, Kalpa, Nirukta, Chhandas, Jyotisha, Grammar and the four Vedas. In a moment, the disciple appeared on the scene with the wet clothes of the Master on his head. Even while he was approaching the august presence of the Master who was about to begin the class, he who so long appeared as an ignoramus, started pouring forth beautiful verses in praise of the great Master. The first eight verses that came out, known as Totakashtaka, were about the greatness of Sri Sankara, expressive of his (disciple's) surrender to him. Then followed the 159 verses constituting the Sruti-Sara-Samuddharanam embodying the essence of the Advaita philosophy. All the verses are in the Totaka metre, except the first one and the last two in the book. Henceforward, he came to be known as Totakacharya.

Leaving out the prolegomena portion of the work consisting of the first four verses, and the concluding eight verses, within the short span of 167 small and simple verses, the author has condensed the essence of the Vedas for the benefit of the aspirant-world, in the form of a dialogue between preceptor and disciple. As he himself states, the treatise stands on a par with the Vedas (Srutivat-sruti-sara-samuddharanam). He warns his readers that the study of this treatise would prove beneficial, if only they possess the Sadhana-

chatushtaya, the fourfold qualification required of the spiritual aspirant. He lays special emphasis on Sraddha, complete faith in and proper Bhava towards the scriptures and one's preceptor.

This small book 'The Revelation of the Ever-revealed' is the result of a modest attempt to expatiate the contents of the verses in the Sruti-sara-samuddharanam of Sri Totakacharya.

Following the age-long tradition, the Acharya in the opening verse offers his obeisance to his Guru, the spiritual preceptor, God and the Absolute, and in the next three verses, he introduces a fully qualified disciple who approaches a Brahmanishtha Guru, a preceptor who is well-versed in the scriptures and established in the Supreme Consciousness, and prays for the final Saving Knowledge. What follows is the instruction of the preceptor to his disciple.

Expecting his readers to be qualified aspirants possessing the Sadhana-chatushtaya, the fourfold qualification, the Acharya, without dwelling on their details," abruptly plunges into the main subject of the treatise which is the Supreme Goal of life and the means of Its attainment. In two verses (5 and 6) he says, the seeker having developed right dispassion for sense-enjoyments, should completely remove the erroneous notion 'I am the body', which would free him from the delusion caused by the primal nescience and establish him in the bliss of the Supreme Absolute. This is to be effected through the transcendence of the five Kosas-the five sheaths, the physical, the vital, the mental, the intellectual and the bliss-which, as though, veil the Atman, and the realisation 'I am the Supreme Knower who is not limited by space, time and objects, who transcends the three Gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas and who is established in the heart'.

If I am of the nature of the Absolute which is one and non-dual, why do I perceive this world of multiplicity? I always feel that I

am an individual subjected to suffering. How can I be identified with the Absolute Brahman, the Supreme Bliss? Is there any proof to show that the real 'I' in me is immortal? These questions are the result of the erroneous identification of the Self with the intellect. In seven verses, 7 to 13, the Author shows, through reasoning, how the Witness of the intellect is different from the intellect. Through the analogies of the sun and its reflections in water in different vessels and of the pot-ether and the sky-ether, it is shown how the one, non-dual, ever-changeless Witness of the intellect appears as many Jivas, objects and concepts, because of the modifications of the intellect. Even as the sun which illumines the objects, is not affected favourably or unfavourably by the good or bad nature of the objects illumined, the Witness who illumines the intellect and its modifications, is not affected in the least by them. The intellect is ever-changing. It sometimes knows objects, and at other times it does not know them. Even while it knows, it changes with change in the objects known. The Witness, on the other hand, remains always unchanged, illumining all the modifications of the intellect, while it cognises the objects and also while it does not. The intellect which puts on the appearance of the subject in all empirical matters, is not the real subject. It is the Witness that is the real subject to which the intellect is also an object, like other objects such as a pot, etc.

Verses 14 to 33 deal with the ego and its position in relation to the Atman, and also the nature and locus of the ego. By pointing out that in all phenomenal dealings the Antahkarana or the mind assumes the forms of both the subject-ego-perceiver, and the object, the perceived, and that both these forms of the Antahkarana are illumined by the pure Consciousness, the Atman, the Acharya also discriminates the ego which is the phenomenal subject, from the real Subject or Witness, the Atman. It is shown that the ego has no locus in the pure Consciousness and that it has no characteristics

of the Atman. If the ego were an attribute of the Atman, it could not have become an object for the Consciousness. Because the ego is capable of becoming an object to the Consciousness, it is not an attribute of Consciousness. It is the attribute of the Antahkarana, but appears to inhere in the Atman due to primal nescience. An example is cited. An iron ball in contact with fire becomes red-hot and we say that the iron is red-hot and it burns whatever it comes in contact with. The red colour and the heat do not belong to the iron but to the fire. After refuting the theory of the Vaiseshikas that the intellect, pleasure, pain, desire, hatred, righteousness and unrighteousness form the attributes of effort, the eternal Atman, it is established that they are the attributes of the Antahkarana, and that the Atman is both the Vivarta Upadana Karana (apparent material cause), and Nimitta Karana (apparent instrumental cause) of the universe which is unreal from the standpoint of the Absolute, yet real from the empirical view.

Verses 34 to 85 deal with the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi, its implied meaning which is the highest Knowledge free from all objectivity and subjectivity, and the place of meditation in that context. After reiterating the fact that that which illumines the intellect and its modifications and also the ego, is the Atman, the changeless Witness which is the same as Brahman, the Acharya gives profuse citations of Upanishadic Mantras to support this great truth of the non-duality of the Supreme, in spite of the appearance of this phenomenal universe of multiplicity. The terms Jiva and Atman are indiscriminately used to impress on the aspirant-readers that they are not really different.

Referring to the texts of the Upanishads dealing with creation, the author says that they should not be interpreted literally to mean that there is a real creation of a real world, lest the only purpose of the Vedas which is the realisation of the absolute non-duality would be defeated. All creational texts serve as Tatastha Lakshana of

Brahman to be used in meditation by the wise seekers and finally transcended to attain the Supreme through the Svarupa Lakshana, the essential nature which is Sat-chit-ananda. The individual Jiva and Brahman are not different like the water and the fish swimming in it, but they are non-different like the ether enclosed in a pot and the free ether in the sky. This is the truth conveyed by the Mahavakya.

The Acharya then puts forth the prima facie view that the Mahavakya instructs the disciple to practise Upasana or meditation on the individual Atman as Brahman and that the sentence does not instruct their identity but is a symbol for meditation. Through logical reasoning, analogies and scriptural authority, he transcends that view, and arrives at the conclusion that the Mahavakya finally imparted to a ripe, qualified disciple by a Brahmanishtha Guru, cannot be said to enjoin any further meditation on the part of the disciple. The place of Upasana or meditation is in the preliminary stages which precede the final initiation of the disciple into the mystic Mahavakya. He cites other Upanishadic sentences wherein meditation is specifically enjoined, to distinguish the Mahavakyas wherein there is no such direct or indirect indication about meditation. The Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi instructs the seeker that he is verily Brahman. By knowing this implied meaning, the seeker attains That which is beyond the meaning of any word or sentence.

A pertinent question is raised and answered in this context. If the identity of one's own Self and the Supreme Self is an established fact as the Advaita Vedantins affirm, why do the Upanishads again and again declare their identity through the Mahavakyas? The answer is: It is true that it is an established fact, but the fact is realised only by the Sages and not others who are struggling in the ocean of transmigration. The instructions of the Upanishads are meant not to the realised Sages to whom they are no more of any use, but to the struggling Sadhakas who due to nescience

erroneously think that they are separate individuals striving to get at the Truth. These Mahavakyas merely remind the aspirants about an already existing fact about their own Self which they have forgotten mysteriously. If the difference that we feel due to our ignorance were real, it would form part of our essential nature, and a thousand Mahavakyas would not be able to do away with it, says the author.

Another objection raised is: If Jiva is Brahman, Brahman is Jiva, and if Jivahood is attributed to Brahman, then Brahman would also be a transmigrating soul subjected to the pains and miseries of this world which statement contradicts Vedic texts. In explaining the fundamental mistake in such an interpretation of the Mahavakya, the Acharya refers to the grammatical construction of the sentence Tat-tvam-asi and points out that the verb 'Asi' which is second person, singular, occurring in the sentence can fit in only when the subject of the sentence is Tvam' which is also second person, singular, and that the use of this verb with 'Tat' as subject which is third person, singular, would be wrong grammar. Therefore, the proper meaning of this Mahavakya can only be 'You are Brahman' and not 'Brahman is you'.

It is only due to the limiting adjunct of the body one is known by the name Jiva' which appears to be different and separated from the non-dual Brahman and subjected to transmigration. The Mahavakya removes this illusion of separateness, and the seeker realises his own essential nature which is nothing but the ever revealed Reality.

Verses 86 to 109 form a retrospective glance over the grounds already covered. Some fresh analogies and arguments are brought forth to establish the view that the Mahavakya does not involve any injunction on meditation. The interesting story of the lost child-prince who subsequently becomes the heir apparent, by hearing from a reliable person the fact of his royal birth, is referred to, to

show that no process of meditation is instructed through the Mahavakya.

Within the span of the 47 verses (110 to 156) the Acharya deals with the study of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep and arrives at the conclusion that all the three states are the conditions of the mind and that the real 'I', the indicative meaning of the term 'Tvam' in the Mahavakya, which is identified with Brahman, is the eternal Witness of the three states unaffected by the happenings in these states and known by the term Turiya, meaning the transcendental pure Consciousness. It is the Noumenon, the Thing-in-Itself, the Absolute. This external world which is essentially non-different from the Absolute, appears to be separate and external to the Self, due to an indescribable, mysterious cause. What happens in the dream state happens in the waking state also. After waking we are ready to accept that the dream world was essentially non-different from the Self and its separateness from oneself and externality inseen during the time of dreaming, are unreal. Similarly, to accept that the waking world also is non-different from the Self and that its appearance external to oneself is unreal, we have to wake up from the present so-called waking state to the real 'waking state' termed Turiya.

The Sadhana prescribed is transcendence from the gross to the subtle, from the subtle to the causal and from the causal to the Absolute. The cause transcends the effect. The effect merges in the cause. The gross physical world of multiplicity is to be merged in the five gross elements which, in their turn, are to be merged in the five subtle elements called the Tanmatras. These Tanmatras have as their cause the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. They are therefore to be merged in the Gunas, and the Gunas have finally to be merged in the Supreme Purusha, the Atman-Brahman.

With a view to confirm what is stated so far, the Acharya deals once again with the nature of the Antahkarana and its projection of

the phenomenal world. The movements of a toy-elephant are unreal because the elephant itself is unreal, being only a toy. Similar is the case of the unreality of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep with their experiences of the appearance and disappearance of the world, appearance in the waking and dream states and disappearance in the deep sleep state, because the mind which has projected the three states, itself is unreal, being a superimposition on the Atman due to ignorance.

The Acharya tries to express the highest Truth which is beyond the grasp of the intellect, the fact that the pure Consciousness, the Supreme Self, which has been stated as the cause for the unreal universe, loses its causal nature also, because when all the effects are proved as unreal, there is no place for a real cause. The

Supreme
Brahman which is one's own Self is, therefore, neither the subject nor the object, neither the cause nor the effect, but It is That which is all this in essence and which transcends all this. This great Truth, Truth of all truth, Satyasya Satyam, which lies hidden in the depths of the vast ocean of the Vedas, has been brought to the surface, for the benefit of the seekers, by the Acharya in the Sruti-sara-samuddharanam.

In verses 157 to 171, the Acharya describes the perfected Sage who has realised the Supreme Truth: 'I am Brahman'. Citing the analogy of the snake and its cast-off slough, he says that the Sage who has realised the non-dual nature of his own Self, casts-off his identification with the body, as the snake does with its slough and does not even cast a glance at it thereafter.

He is once for all freed from all kinds of limitations and relations.

In this great ocean of Consciousness filled with the Bliss of immortality, eternity and homogeneity, the Sage has nothing to accept or reject.

The treatise concludes with the description of the manifestation of the Supreme as the Virat Purusha, the Cosmic Being to whom the universe forms His body, as it were (verses 172-179).

The Supreme remains ever revealed and never veiled, for there is nothing which can really veil It. In every cell of every being, moving and non-moving, sentient and insentient, this great Universal Being exists as its Essence. Who can veil this Being! Therefore It is ever revealed. But due to the ignorance of this fact, one's senses and the mind become extroverted, and therefore one suffers. Removal of this ignorance and realisation of this great Truth through the introversion of the senses and the mind, is figuratively called revelation.

To Through the proper study of the scriptures is effected the complete redemption of the seeker from this cycle of births and deaths, the final Liberation from all pain, even while living in this world. To whom is this liberation; is it for the Soul or the body, the only two constituents of the personality of the seeker? It cannot be for the Soul, for It is always free, being non-dual, pure awareness, untouched by either pain or pleasure. It cannot also be for the body, for body (the gross and subtle) is inert matter and is not in need of liberation. In between the ever-inert body and the ever-sentient Atman, we have an unreal 'ego', which is also known by other names such as mind, Ahankara, Maya, Ajnana, etc. This most mysterious entity which becomes as though the cause of creation, preservation and dissolution of the phenomenal universe, thinks itself to be in bondage, and therefore, is in need of liberation. Life is a great enigma, a mystery. With the help of the scriptures and his own preceptor and through the process of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana, the seeker has to solve the riddle of the universe. A mysterious transformation takes place in the seeker, rather a transcendence from happiness and misery to bliss, from disease and death to immortality, from darkness and ignorance to Light and

Knowledge. With this great transcendence, the seeker becomes a sage. Neither this phenomenal world, nor his own body which is a part of this world, does undergo any great outward change. Therefore, others see the sage moving about in this world with his body. But, he is not the old struggling seeker who was considering everything here as external to himself, some good, some bad and others indifferent, who was thinking that it was the world which was standing in his way of reaching the Goal, and that he was different from everything other than himself. He is now the Atman- Brahman Itself and feels that He is the all, and everything is Himself. There is nothing to be rejected or accepted, for everything is He alone. This is neither rhetoric, nor any wordy gymnastic, but is the actual experience of those extremely fortunate but rare souls who have realised the Reality that pervades every atom of the universe like the warp and woof in a cloth, the Noumenon in the phenomena.

Gurudev H.H. Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was once asked by one of his inquisitive devotees: "Maharajji, may I know whether Swamiji has seen God?" Quick and prompt came the reply from that great God-man: "I see only God". All scriptures are only the commentary of this one simple sentence of the Sage.

While all in the state of ignorance see the world of multiplicity, the sages with their divine intuitive eye see the same world as God and God alone. To them everything here is Akhanda Ekarasa Sat-chit-ananda- the unbroken, one, essence of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute. To the completely worldly-minded, this sense-world alone is real; to the seekers, the world is an unreal appearance
to be transcended through Manana and Nididhyasana; and to the sages, the very same world is the manifestation of the Supreme Brahman, nay, Brahman Itself.

SRUTI-SARA-SAMUDDHARANAM

OF SRI TOTAKACHARYA

(A Free Rendering of the Verses")

1) I salute again and again the Supreme Being, Lord of the three worlds, destroyer of ignorance and all its concomitant sorrows, endowed with all excellent, divine attributes and most praiseworthy, as well as Maharshi Veda Vyasa, scion in the race of Sage Vasishtha, son of Sage Parasara (who was the son of Sage Sakti) equal to Brahma himself in prowess, and blue in colour like the spotless radiant sky.

NOTE: This is the traditional salutation to the Guru Parampara, namely, Narayana, Brahma, Vasishtha, Sakti, Parasara and Vyasa.

2) It is only a rare person indeed who would be able to renounce the attractions of the whole world having known it to be transient and composed of constituents generated by the effects of action. It is he alone who can fully realise that the Imperishable cannot be attained through anything that is of a perishable nature.

NOTE: This is the definition of an aspirant fit to receive the knowledge of Brahman.

3) The fit aspirant endowed with the desire to know and attain the Eternal, respectfully expresses his feelings before a Guru who is established in the Law of the Spirit (Dharma) and who is established in Its knowledge, and surrenders himself to such a Guru prostrating himself before him in reverence.

4) Divine Master! Save me, this humble disciple who has surrendered himself, having been drowned in the ocean of Samsara abounding in the crocodiles of joys and sorrows and filled with the waters of birth and death. I have unflinchingly offered myself at your feet for refuge. Kindly instruct me who has sought resort under you.

5) The Preceptor exhorts: It is due to love and hatred, etc., that one enters into higher and lower births, etc. Therefore, renounce attachment to objects of sense, namely, sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Relinquish attachment to the physical body of yours. Fix yourself constantly in your essential nature as nature as the Supreme Spirit. Thereby, by the aid of Self-Knowledge sever the ignorance which causes infatuation and bondage.

Give up the self-arrogating feeling as 'this I am', 'this is mine', etc., in regard to the five sheaths such as the physical body, etc. Thereafter, become aware intensely of the Consciousness which is hidden in the cave of the heart, and which is infinite, absolutely real and beyond all attributes, as 'I am That':

7) Just as the one sun appears as manifold when reflected in different water-filled pots and the one sky appears to be limited on account of the adjuncts, such as the pot, cloth, etc., in a manifold manner, even so, the one, unchangeable Witness of the intellect that you really are, appears as individualised in a manifold manner, on account of the limiting adjuncts in the form of the isolated intellects.

8) Just as the whole world is illumined by the light of the sun, even so, the entire world involved in the minds of the individuals is illumined by the self-luminous Consciousness within. Therefore, be changeless and luminous like the sun, because by You as this supernal light is all this universe illumined. Well, on account of this reason, be you always pure, intelligent and free in your nature.

9) The intellect illumines the objects only by identifying itself with them. Hence, only that object is known to exist whose form the intellect has assumed by such identification. The object cannot be known to exist unless the intellect assumes its shape by self-identification. Thus, it is clear that the intellect is changeful. The Atman is changeless.

10) The psychoses of the intellect are ever illumined by the self-luminous Consciousness of the Atman. Thus it is to be known that the Atman is ever changeless. If Consciousness were also changeful like the intellect, there would be no continuity of perception of objects even by the intellect (and there would be intermittent perception).

11) All the activities (internal as well as external) are known only by the pure Consciousness that you really are. Thus it is to be known that the psychoses of intellect and its attributes are not your essential nature. You are totally different from the modifications of the intellect.

12) The intellect is an object (in the same way as the pot is an object). Hence the psychoses of the intellect are illumined by someone else, even as the objects outside are. Even as the objects outside are inert and that which knows them is conscious, the psychoses of the intellect are internal objects of an inert character and are illumined by a Witness different from them.

13) Since objects outside are illumined by a Consciousness different from them, they themselves are not self-conscious. Even so, the psychoses of the intellect illumined by a Consciousness different from them do not know themselves.

14) The mind (or intellect) in its activities assumes, on the one hand, the form of the object; and on the other hand, the character of the Atman. Both these psychoses are illumined by the Consciousness of the Atman alone.

15) By nature, agency in action belongs to the intellect. When this nature of the intellect superimposed on the Atman, the latter appears to be the agent of action. By the very same process of superimposition, the ignorant mistake the ego-ridden intellect for the Atman.

16) If it were were not for the deluding action of the ego which confounds everyone, there would be no perception of the world of activity, because it is seen that where the Atman does not assume the form of the ego, there no object-perception is possible. Hence, it is to be known that object-perception is possible only where there is superimposition mutually between the ego and the Atman.

17) If the intellect were to take only the form of the object in perception and not assume the character of the Atman, then there would only be the form of the object produced in the intellect and not consciousness of such perception.

18) The Atman-consciousness is the Knower. The psychosis of the intellect is of the nature of an object. Unless there is mutual superimposition between them by self-appropriation of characters, there would be inappropriateness of the positions of the perceived as well as the perceiver, and there would be no possibility of people entering into any kind of activity which is possible only through this superimposition.

19) At first, there is the desire of the intellect in the form of 'May I see' and thereafter the eyes are directed towards the object of perception through this desire. The process takes place in the perception through the other senses, such as the ear, etc.

20) No one by renunciation of the functions of the ego can engage oneself in the activities of the world. Therefore, in the field of empirical activity, the superimposition of the ego (as stated) becomes imperative.

21) Is the ego a quality of the Atman-consciousness? Or is it the quality of the intellect, or again, is it a quality of both of these? In this manner, should seekers of Truth, renouncing lethargy, put forth effort in the direction of contemplation of this kind by logical reasoning, for the purpose of the highest spiritual good.

22) If the ego were a quality of the Atman, it would not have been perceptible or recognisable, because the form or the attribute of a substantive cannot stand separated from it and it cannot remain independent of the substantive. (Also under such a supposition, the Atman and the ego would not stand in the position of the illuminer and the illumined, which in fact is the case.)

23) The attribute which is inherent in a substantive, cannot be illumined either by that substantive or by another attribute thereof. And if the Atman is to be regarded as the substantive in which the attribute inheres, then the substantive which is the Atman and the attribute which is the ego, would not be capable of distinction by spatiality and objectivity.

24) In practical life, it is seen that the qualities of fire do not ever mutually stand in the position of the illuminer and the illumined. The fire does not illumine its own quality. Nor does the quality of fire illumine the fire.

25) The impermanent qualities which have been attributed to the Atman as belonging to it by the Vaiseshika school, are not really the qualities of the Atman. By the same argument, the doctrine of the Vaiseshika is to be refuted, because the eternal Atman on account of the association of impermanent qualities, cannot be possessed of attributes.

26) The Srutis have often proclaimed the creation of space and hence space is impermanent. According to the Vaiseshika, the impermanent quality of sound belongs to space which is eternal. But this is not feasible, for space is non-eternal.

27) The connection of the mind with the Atman and vice versa is something like the connection of space with a pestle and vice versa. Between these two, there cannot be any conjunction or disjunction. Because, the Atman and space have both been declared to be partless in their nature (and the mind and the pestle are with parts).

28) It is seen that objects with parts such as a rope or a pot can have mutual conjunction. Hence, the same principle has to be applied elsewhere also, that only things with parts can come in contact with things with parts, and not otherwise.

29) There cannot be conjunction of a partless thing with things that have parts, nor can there be conjunction of what has parts, with what has no parts. This is what is seen in daily life. Hence, our opinion as held above is correct.

30) Nor is it possible to establish the connection of a partless thing with imagined parts, because the imagined object is always held to be unreal, and it is indefensible to assume the connection of what is real with what is unreal.

31) The knowers of the Vedanta hold that the Supreme Being, which is pure Consciousness, in a sense, is the material cause of the world. Whatever is other than 'this' is declared to be unreal.

32) Thus, there is no tenable argument on behalf of the Vaiseshika, according to which the Eternal can have a non-eternal attribute. Thus, our position is settled that the Eternal cannot be in conjunction with the non-eternal.

33) The ego cannot be an attribute of the Atman which Consciousness, because the former is an object of the latter. The ego is as much an object as the intellect is. (The Atman is the Seer and the ego is the seen.)

34) It is declared that the Supreme Atman is the illumining, changeless Witness of the intellect which takes the form of the object as well as of the ego which stands in the position of the seen.

35) It may be doubted as to how the embodied soul can be equated with the disembodied Supreme Being. But, there is no contradiction in this, because the Sruti corroborates this position.

36) In several passages of the Upanishads, Consciousness has been declared to be the same as the Supreme Reality. Examples are such places where it is said: 'the thinker cannot be thought', 'it is the unthought thinker', 'that Brahman is secondless', 'That thou art', 'all this is the Atman', 'whatever is there is also here', 'some rare hero alone beholds the internal Atman', etc.

37) 'That which cannot be expressed through speech but which is the cause of the expression of speech; that which cannot be seen with the eyes but which is the cause of perception through the eyes; that which the ears cannot hear but which is the cause of hearing through the ear; that which the mind cannot think but which is the cause of every thought arising in the mind, -know That to be the Brahman'.

Y38) 'That Consciousness through which one knows the processes of acts of speaking, seeing, hearing, thinking, etc., That know thou as the Supreme Reality'. Thus has the Sruti declared.

39) Herein I have explained the state of Supreme Being only in outline. The Sruti further explains that this Reality is subtler than the subtle in quality and that it is identical with 'You yourself'.

40) Just as space which is limited by the presence of pot, etc., in it, does not really become a part or modification of the universal space, Consciousness which is limited by such forms as individuality, does not become a part or a modification of the Supreme Consciousness.

41) Just as space which is inside a pot goes by the name of pot-space, Consciousness which is limited by individuality, goes by the name of individual consciousness or Jiva.

42) By that Supreme Self which is imperishable in Itself, the whole universe including space has been created, and after this creation, It entered into the various formations thereof in the form of the

individualities, even as space may be said to enter into a pot after it is created.

43) The identity of the individual with the Supreme Being is ascertained also from such scriptural statements which declare that the whole universe right from space onwards has arisen from the Supreme Self, because the passages concerning creation are really directed to the ascertainment of the ultimate non-dual existence of the Supreme Reality.

44) If it is held that the passages describing creation are to be taken literally in their meaning, then they would serve no purpose, because no one is going to gain anything by merely hearing that the world has been created by God.

45) The Srutis repeatedly declare the unreality of modifications (in the form of creation) and that the Absolute Being alone is real. It is not the intention of the Srutis to speak merely of the fact of creation (but to indicate thereby the unity of all things in the Absolute).

46) The statement "That thou art in the Sruti has no relevance to the creation of the world merely. It has significance only when it rouses the consciousness to the reality of the Absolute.

47) That is the Supreme Being who witnesses unchangeably the activities of everything, moving and unmoving, as well as of the intellects of individuals. This position of the absoluteness of the Supreme Being is established by acceptable proof.

48) If the Witness-Consciousness behind the intellect were to be different from the Supreme Being, as a crocodile is from the waters in which it lives, and if they are not identical like the pot-space and the universal space, then why should it not contradict the statement of the Sruti 'That thou art'?

49) (Prima facie view:) It may be held that the statement 'That thou art' does not remove ignorance and illumine the reality of the

Supreme Being, but, it merely incites a person to perform the action of meditation on the Reality, and therefore, there is no objection to interpreting this statement in the manner suggested above.

50) In the same way as the injunction that objects such as the mind are to be taken as symbols for meditation as Brahman and images are to be taken as symbols for meditation on deities, the injunction 'That thou art' may be likewise taken as a symbol for meditation on its indicative meaning.

51) Or, it may be that the term 'thou' in the sentence That thou art', is equated with "That', because of the nature of the Sat in 'That' inhering in 'thou'. This is like calling a man, say Isvaragupta, a lion because of his quality of bravery. (The sentence does not speak of the identity of 'thou' and 'That'.)

52) Or, the sentence 'That thou art' may be eulogistic, similar to sentences such as 'you are the king', 'you are God'. Or, the sentence may mean 'That art thou' and not 'thou art That'.

53) If the Jiva signified by the term 'thou' in the sentence That thou art', is always the Supreme Brahman, why is it that the Jiva is not aware of it? Further, wherein lies the necessity for the Upanishads to declare it through the sentence?

54) Therefore, the sentence 'That thou art' should be taken as a symbol for meditation. It does not declare the identity of the Jiva and the Supreme Brahman. For the same reason, similar other sentences also should be taken to enjoin meditation.

55) (Reply:) The sentence "That thou art' is different from those sentences enjoining meditation, cited by you. Therefore, this sentence does not enjoin meditation, but imparts the knowledge of the identity of the individual soul with the Supreme Brahman.

56) In the sentences enjoining meditation on the mind as Brahman and on images as deities, there is the use of the word 'iti' which

specifies meditation on one thing as another. In the sentence "That thou art' there is no use of the word 'iti'. Therefore, (it does not enjoin meditation and) it is distinctly different from the other sentences.

57) Those sentences enjoining meditation do not speak about the identity of the sun, mind, etc., with the Supreme Brahman, but they exhort meditation on the sun etc., as Brahman.

58) Just as a clay pot is not different from clay, even so, mind, etc., are not different from Brahman – if the sentences enjoining meditation are interpreted thus and the mind, etc., are identified with Brahman, then the words 'should meditate' (Upasita) occurring in those sentences, would become meaningless.

59) The words 'mind' and 'Brahman' have the same case termination. Therefore, when the words 'should meditate' and 'as' are discarded, the two words being in apposition and the latter being the cause and the former the effect, they become identical. If this be the argument, it would definitely result in the unreality of the mind.

60) Then, it may be contended that in the sentence 'That thou art' where the identity of the Jiva and Brahman is instructed on the ground that the two terms 'That' and 'thou' having the same case termination are placed in apposition, the Jiva signified by the word 'thou' would also become unreal.

(61) (The reply is) wherever a term signifying an effect is identified with a term signifying its cause, then alone unreality is attributed to the effect and not otherwise, as for example in the sentence: This pot is clay'.

62) It has been stated in several places in the Sruti that objects like the mind, etc., are the effects of Brahman, the ultimate Cause. Therefore, when the mind etc., and Brahman are placed in

apposition and they have the same case termination, they should be clearly understood as unreal.

63) But, nowhere in the Sruti it is stated that the embodied Jiva is born of Brahman. Therefore, the wise know that the Jiva is quite different from effects such as the mind, etc.

64) The imperishable Brahman, through mere desire, projected the universe consisting of ether, etc., that Brahman Itself entered into the universe thus created by Him and He alone is well known as the Jiva-says the Sruti.

65) Therefore, no distinction can arise in the embodied Jiva as the effect of the Supreme Brahman. In the absence of this distinction, the Jiva cannot become unreal also.

66) In the sentence 'Salt is (sea) water' there is Samanadhikaranya relation between the two words signifying cause and its effect, and therefore, the effect becomes unreal. In the sentence 'That thou art', the words "That' and 'thou' with the same case termination, have no such Samanadhikaranya relation as between a cause and its effect, and therefore, the Jiva cannot become unreal.

67) Since Sruti has denied the Jiva as an effect of the Supreme Brahman, there is not the least distinction between the Jiva and Brahman.

68) When there is thus not the latest difference between the Jiva and the Supreme Brahman in their own nature, what does the sentence That thou art' declare? Similarly, what does the sentence 'This is the Inner Controller, your own Immortal Self' mean? (Both the sentences declare only their identity.)

69) If there is really even the least trace of distinction between the Supreme Lord and the Jiva, the sentences meant to refute their distinction will not be able to effect it.

70) In this world, the inherent quality of an object is born with the object and is not acquired from another.

No sentence can destroy that quality, it being the very nature of the object.

71) The sentence That thou art' merely reminds (about an existing fact which is somehow forgotten). It does not effect any change in the existing entity. The entity also cannot be said to leave its own nature merely because of a sentence, lest there be the defect of absence of finality.

72) The dull-witted superimpose objects and their attributes on the Atman, even as the attributes of earth (like colour, and smell) are superimposed on water (which is by nature colourless and odourless). The sentence That thou art' refutes this superimposition.

73) In the sentence That thou art' there is no injunction to meditate on the Jiva as Brahman. Therefore, the sentence does not enjoin meditation. Neither is the sentence of an attributive nature, nor is it eulogistic in its expression.

74) In Vedanta, Brahman, the cause of the universe, Itself is given the name Jiva due to the limiting adjunct. Therefore, in this context, the Sruti does not declare that Brahman has assumed the form of the Jiva.

75) If the sentence were to attribute Jivahood to the Supreme Brahman which is described as subtler than the subtle, and as the cause of the universe, then these attributes of Brahman would be falsified. On the other Supreme Brahman, hand, when these attributes are accepted for the , the assumption of Jivahood by Brahman would be falsified.

76) If the sentence 'That thou art' were to attribute Jivahood to the Supreme Lord, it will not effect the destruction of the cause of bondage of the Jiva, which is its cherished goal.

77) At first, the two words "Thou' and 'Art' get connected. Thereafter the combination of these two words joins with the word "That'. With the verb 'Art' (Asi), certainly the noun 'Thou' alone can get connected.

78) A thousand nouns alone do not carry any sense without a verb, because it is the verbs Ling, etc. (would become, etc.) which create the sense of enjoining, prohibiting etc., of actions.

79) Sage Panini also has prescribed the verb 'art' (asi) for the second
person, singular noun. Therefore, the terms 'thou' and 'art' get united first, and thereafter, the term 'That' should be connected with the verb 'art'.

80) A person who hears Thou art' becomes inquisitive of knowing 'What am I'. Then he will be told: Thou art That-Brahman with the attributes of extreme subtlety, etc.

81) The indicative meaning of the term 'Thou', viz., the Atman, has been declared to be the same as the indicative meaning of the term 'That', viz., Brahman, through the sentence 'That thou art'. For this reason, the sentence does not certainly say that Brahman has become the transmigrating Jiva.

82) The sense-organs of the Jiva, by their own nature, are turned towards their respective objects outside. Therefore, the Jiva does not realise its real nature of the Supreme Brahman. Hence, the great sentence of the Sruti duly instructs the Jiva on this subject.

83) There are several Sruti texts on the subject. One such text is that which begins with 'outgoing are the senses'. There are Smriti texts also. They begin with 'as the wind carries away a boat in the

ocean', 'well restraining all the senses', 'let him withdraw through reason held in firmness', etc.

84) One should not say: 'Because I do not see any proof for the identity of the Jiva with Brahman, the Jiva is different from Brahman'. For, we hear from the Sruti that the Jiva is non-different from Brahman even now, as also before creation and after dissolution.

85) The Jiva is really the Supreme Brahman and the sentence instructs this fact of identity. There is nothing contradicting in this, even as in the instance of Sri Rama (who was Lord Vishnu himself, but thought that he was the son of King Dasaratha and was instructed by the Devas 'You are Vishnu').

86) It was argued: "The sentence That thou art' enjoins meditation and therefore it does not instruct the identity of the Jiva with Brahman". This is not true.

87) There is no such injunction 'Meditate on Brahman' in the sentence. 'You art That' is the instruction of the Sruti. Because it is so, there is nothing wrong in the conclusion that the sentence is not desirous of enjoining meditation on Brahman.

88) If any verb of the nature of injunction is introduced in the sentence from anywhere, it would render the sentence meaningless. Because any interpolation by human agency would not acquire Vedic status. This is the view of those who are learned in the Vedas.

89) O dull-witted! Is the sentence incapable of imparting the qualified aspirant its Own inherent meaning? Why do you bring in from somewhere else a verb involving an injunction, unheard of?

90) Introduction in the sentence of a new word not heard of and which contradicts the import of the Sruti, is not acceptable to the wise. Therefore, that meaning which is given by those who are devoted to the Vedas, in accordance with the import of the Sruti, is

alone to be understood and not that which is the imagination of an unpurified intellect.

91) Man's identification with his body is the cause of all troubles including birth and death. When he frees himself from that identification and realises 'I am the Supreme Brahman' (through the sentence That thou art'), he attains the greatest good.

92) When the superimposition of the Self on the body is removed, one is established in one's identity with the Supreme Brahman, according to the Vedic sentences "That thou art', 'He is the Inner Controller, the Immortal Self', and the like.

93) If the sentence does not remove the delusion of considering the body as the Self, the Jiva would helplessly go on experiencing the fruits of Karmas, in the form of pleasure and pain caused by egoism.

(94) Let the sentence enjoin Karma in the form of meditation and not instruct the identity of the Jiva with Brahman. Then, what would be the result that may accrue to one from the meditation on Brahman? I shall discuss about it.

95) Man is by nature mortal. By meditation on the Supreme Brahman, he will not be able to effect identity with Brahman, because in this world, no object ever leaves its own inherent nature on any account.

96) Even if it is possible for the Jiva to attain identity with Brahman through meditation, the Jiva will not be able to free itself from its inherent mortal nature, because complete identity of two entities with quite contrary attributes, is not possible.

97) It may be argued that just as iron when treated through alchemical process, leaves off its own nature and becomes gold, even so man through meditation on Brahman can certainly leave off his inherent nature and can become Brahman.

98) When the iron is heated and treated with mercury and other medicinal herbs, the particles of iron are veiled and an appearance of gold is created. The iron does not become gold.

99) When milk is poured into water, the particles of milk cover the particles of water and the erroneous idea that the water has become milk, is created. Similarly, in gilding, the mistaken idea of gold is created in silver. Even so, is created the idea of gold in iron.

100) With the depletion of the power of alchemy, the golden appearance of the iron vanishes. That which is produced is perishable - is well known. Attributes newly acquired will certainly perish.

101) If through meditation on Brahman, Immortality is newly attained by the Jiva, that Immortality will surely have an end, like the heavenly worlds earned through sacrificial acts, because it is an established fact that all effects brought about by Karmas, are transient.

102) Jiva and Brahman have opposing attributes, and hence the former cannot attain the ultimate liberation by merging with the latter. Even if the two become one, the union will not last for long.

103) Through meditation on Brahman, the Jiva can attain only relative immortality and not the ultimate one. The immortality attained through meditation is not free from defects such as impermanency, etc. This is the view of the learned.

104) Therefore, the sentence "That thou art' does not enjoin Karma in the form of meditation. It removes wrong notions such as 'I am this body', 'this son is mine', arising out of non-discrimination; (and the Supreme Knowledge reveals itself).

105) In all the Upanishads, since the term 'thou' indicating the Jiva and the term 'That' indicating the Supreme Brahman have the same case termination, the sentence instructs only their non-difference.

Therefore, it is the duty of the knowers of the import of the Vedas to follow the same interpretation in the case of other similar sentences also in the Sruti.

106) Acharya Sankara also has interpreted the sentence 'That thou art' as destructive of nescience. He has established this fact by citing the analogy of the prince who grew as a hunter and subsequently regained his real status through hearing from one who knew about his royal birth.

107) Therefore, renounce the idea 'I am this body' that is ingrained in you due to non-discrimination, and know that you are the non-dual, imperishable Self.

108) The Supreme Brahman is neither the mind, nor the intellect, nor the senses. It is neither the Rajoguna, nor Tamoguna, nor Sattvaguna. Similarly, It is none of the elements, the earth, water, fire, air and ether.

109) Know that Supreme Brahman which is without mind, intellect, senses, the three Gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether, as your own Self.

110) The learned call that state in which the mind leads the senses towards their objects, and the intellect along with the senses, moves amidst them, as the waking state. Know: 'I, the Witness has no waking state'.

111) When the sense and motor organs withdraw themselves from their respective objects and become quiescent, when even without the organs and the objects, the mind assumes their forms and experiences the objects through the impressions created by past experience, the learned call that state as dream.

112) That condition in which there is no activity of either the organs or the mind, is called Sushupti (the state of merging in one's

Self), deep sleep, by the knowers of the import of Vedanta who have renounced all desires.

113) These waking, dream and deep sleep states are the conditions of the intellect. They may succeed one another either in the above order or without any order. Know: 'These three states are never in Me, I am always of the nature of Turiya, the pure Consciousness'.

114) The non-discriminating man imagines that the three states are in the pure, innermost Atman. It is with reference to this erroneous conception, the Supreme Atman is given the appellation Turiya (Fourth).

115) The three states with reference to which the Supreme Atman is named Turiya, are unreal with unreal attributes, as they are the creations of the unreal mind, even as the movements of an imaginary elephant are unreal because the elephant itself is unreal.

116) The Sruti states with the help of hundreds of analogies, that this whole universe constituted by the elements right from the ether down to earth, the sense-objects, the senses with the mind and intellect, is unreal (not born at all).

117) Just as this filthy body exists supported by the three humours, viz., the phlegm, bile and wind, even so, this universe even from its time of creation till dissolution, exists supported by fire, sun and moon.

118) Thus it is well known that this triad, of fire, sun and moon is the cause for the existence of this universe. It is also an equally well-known fact amongst the knowers of Sruti and Smriti, that the triad is unreal. This fact is stated in the Sruti.

119) The three forms red, white and black in the fire, sun and moon belong to the three elements, the fire, water and earth respectively. The Sruti which reveals this fact, also says that the three forms alone are real.

120) The nature of golden ornaments is gold itself. Gold is the cause of the names chain, bangle, etc. Ornaments are said to be unreal, because they are always changing.

121) In a discriminating man, the knowledge about gold in the ornaments never changes. Therefore, gold is said to be real, being the cause which does not change with the change in the effects, such as the ornaments.

122) Fire, sun and moon are similar to the ornaments in that both are effects and therefore unreal. And the three forms red, white and black in the fire, water and earth are similar to the gold in the ornaments, in that they are the causes and therefore real.

123) Through the above example, the Sruti declares the unreality of fire, sun and moon. The reality of the forms red, white and black which are the causes, is also stated by the Sruti.

124) Applying the example of the golden ornaments, the unreality of fire, sun and moon has been established on the ground that they are the effects of the forms red, white and black. The Sruti confirms that all effects are unreal, while the cause alone is real.

125) One who wants to establish the unreal nature of a cloth goes into its cause, the thread, and says that cloth being an effect, is unreal and the thread being its cause, is real. Even so, one who desires to prove the unreality of the fire, sun and moon, goes into their cause viz., the red, white and black forms and establishes the unreality of the former and the reality of the latter - says the Sruti.

126) This ephemeral universe starting from the earth and ending with the ether, has appeared from the Supreme Brahman. Being thus an effect, it is unreal. The Supreme, being the cause, is real.

127) Through what has been said above, it is established that the Supreme Brahman which is the ultimate cause, is not unreal and that the universe which is other to It, is unreal. Thus is confirmed

the statement about the unreality of the universe, already made (in verse 116).

128) For the very same reason, the unreality of the mind is also proved. All the activities of the mind in the form of waking, dream and deep sleep states, also are proved to be unreal, like the movements of a toy elephant.

129) O Lord! (asks the disciple): The Sruti has not stated that the mind is born out of either the Supreme Brahman or the ether and the other elements. How can it be said that the mind which is thus not an effect, is unreal? Kindly give me a conclusive answer.

130) (The preceptor replies:) Your statement is not correct. The Sruti has in the 7th Chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad, mentioned the birth of the mind along with Prana and others, from the Atman. You have now to say how the mind which is an effect and which has an ever changing nature, can be said to be real.

131) In the Mundaka Upanishad also, the birth of the mind along with Prana, senses, the five elements, the ether and the rest, from the Supreme Purusha, the Paramatman, is mentioned. Therefore, come to the firm conclusion that the mind is unreal.

132) The Sruti has stated that the mind is the product of food. This proves the elemental nature of the mind. Therefore, the mind is as unreal as this reviling physical body. Arrive at this firm conclusion.

133) The proposition is that the ether and the other elements are unreal. The reason advanced is that they are products which are non-existent in the beginning and end (before creation and after destruction). The example to support the reasoning is the unreality of the golden ornaments. Applying the reason that all the elements also are effects like the ornaments, the conclusion that 52001 the elements are unreal is arrived at.

134) The ornaments were not in the gold before (their origin) and they will not be (after their destruction). Therefore, they are not really existent even now (when they appear to exist). Similarly, the elements and the rest (which have birth were non-existent before creation and will be non-existent after dissolution and now also when they appear to be therefore, even existent they) are unrea, non-existent.l

135) If the effects like ornaments born out of causes like gold, are really separate from the causes, why there is no increase in the weight of the effects viz., the ornaments compared to the original weight of the gold? This has to be explained (and can be explained only by accepting the principle that the effect is non-different from its cause).

136) Because there is no real ornament separate from, and over and above the gold, the ornament is not known as distinct from gold. The cause alone is real and the effects are unreal.

137) (It may be contended that) the name and form of the cause are different from the name and form of the effect. Therefore, how can one non-difference between the cause and effect? This needs a reply.

138) (The reply is:) In this empirical world, people directly see grass, thread, gold and earth in the forms of mat, cloth, chain and pot respectively. Therefore, there is no difference between cause and effect.

139) Your inference that if the effect is not different from the cause, there would not have been difference in the name and form of the effect from those of the cause, is nullified through direct perception, for people see with their eyes the non-difference between earth and pot. fw Insizion

140) The form, action and name of an actor in the stage, are seen different from his original form, action and name. Still the person does not really become a separate entity. Why is this? The logicians have necessarily to answer this question.

141) The birth of non-being cannot happen on any account, because it is completely non-existent like the sky-flower. There is no birth of the Being, because It is already existent, like the eternal Atman even before creation.

142) If any one following Sage Kapila, the founder of the Sankhya philosophy, and his followers Asuri and Panchasikha and support their view, I shall never agree to them and say that Being has birth. Listen to what I have to say.

143) That which was in seed form in the cause, manifests itself as the effect at the time of creation. This theory seems to be flawless. If you see any defect, state that.

144) It may be asked whether the attribute of the effect which is said to be already present in seed form in the cause before the birth of the effect, is now present as it is in the effect or not. If the attribute was known to exist in the cause before, then, to say that it has now appeared in a different form, is unreasonable and would be against facts.

145) On the other hand, if it is replied that the attribute of the effect was not present in its present form in the cause before creation, then it would mean acceptance of the birth of non-being. That which comes into being with birth, will necessarily become non-existent with its death.

146) Your much cherished theory can never be rectified. Further, this theory is slowly approximating the Vaiseshika philosophy of Sage Kanada.

147) It is known by teachers of yore that birth of non-being and the death of Being are the tenets of the Vaiseshika philosophy, and that they are quite contrary to all accepted reasoning. You have strongly contradicted it and I also have expressed my resentment.

148) The philosophy of Sage Kanada has been refuted by Sri Krishna, the Preceptor of all preceptors, in the Bhagavadgita verse which states: 'The unreal hath no being and there is no non-being of the Real', while addressing Arjuna with the aim of bestowing on him the Supreme Good.

149) Thus it has been argued out, through proper reasoning, that both non-being and Being cannot have birth. That which is Being-cum-non-being also cannot have birth. Why? Because there is verily no such entity.

150) The mind and all psychoses can only come under either Being or non-being. For this reason, it is well known that they cannot have birth or existence.

151) If, somehow, birth is posited either for Being or non-being, such birth cannot have reality, for the Sruti has declared its unreality.

152) Since mind has been declared unreal, all psychoses also are unreal. And because all psychoses are unreal, what has been stated before is confirmed.

153) The three states, with reference to which the Supreme Atman was given the name Turiya (Fourth), are unreal, because these states are the conditions of the unreal mind. They are like the movements of an imaginary snake.

154.) Through the strength of reasoning and Sruti, it has been declared that the mind along with the whole universe is unreal. Therefore, the non-dual, imperishable Supreme Being alone is real. Everything other to It is certainly illusory and unreal.

155) There is nothing whatsoever other to the Supreme which is causeless and which has neither inside nor outside. This is the solemn instruction of the Vedas. Hence, anything other to the Supreme Brahman becomes unreal without doubt.

156) Citing the example of the homogeneous salinity in a lump of salt, the Sruti has established that in the Supreme Atman, there is neither externality nor internality and that It is a mass of consciousness (as it were) and that, therefore, whatever is cognised as different from It, is only non-being. Hence, anything other to the Atman becomes unreal.

157) One should always know: 'I am ever the Supreme Atman', the Atman which has been established as pure Consciousness-mass like a lump of salt and from which has been eliminated all that is different from It.

158) You take refuge in that Supreme which is not atomic, not great, which is not short and not long, which is free of all attributes and distinctions and which is the transcendental, the imperishable, as your Atman.

159) One should renounce, step by step, the six attributes (hunger and thirst, pain and delusion, and birth and death) which belong to the vital force, the intellect and the physical body respectively, and which are considered by the non-discriminating people as the attributes of the Self. Then should one always know: 'I am the Seer alone'.

160) The snake before casting off its slough, identifies itself with that slough. When once it leaves the slough over its own burrow, it never identifies itself with that slough thereafter.

161) Like the snake, through want of discrimination, you identify yourself with this filthy body. You also should, like the snake,

leave off the body as not the Self, after realising your oneness with the Atman, the pure Consciousness.

162) In the sun, there is neither day nor night, because the sun is always effulgent. Similarly, in you, the eternal seer, the pure Consciousness, there are no attributes in the form of both knowledge and ignorance.

163) Come to the firm understanding: 'There is never any bondage or liberation in me, the extremely pure and free Consciousness, the Seer, devoid of both knowledge and ignorance'.

164) Come to the conviction: 'In me, the Seer, there is nothing to be accepted or rejected, either by me or by others'. Also, take the decision that in the Self, none can have any action and there is none besides Me, the Self.

165) O intelligent one, know for certain: 'I, the pure Being, is the one Witness of the intellect and its modifications, in all bodies moving and non-moving, and therefore, there is none other than Me, the Witness'.

166) The presence and absence of clouds and other dirt in the pure sky do not make any difference to the sky. Even so, in you, the Supreme all-pervading Seer, there is not the least trace of any distinction caused by differentiation of duality.

167) It has been stated earlier that duality is unreal. That is only with reference to empirical dealings. Reality can never have any relation with unreality, even as a river can never acquire depth with waters of a mirage.

168) What is the use of going on arguing and counter arguing! Listen to the whole Truth put in a nut-shell: The three states of waking, dream and deep sleep are mere imaginations on the pure, unchanging Atman. They are therefore always unreal.

169) What is known as mind, the agent in all empirical dealings, is declared by the Vedas and Sastras as imaginary, and therefore unreal and non-existent. This fact has also been proved through much logical reasoning. For this reason, the whole universe different from You, the pure Consciousness, is non-being.

170) That which is without exterior and interior, of the nature of one, homogeneous essence, non-dual, which has neither cause nor effect nor any destruction of any kind, which is of the nature of pure Consciousness, endless, and true-That you are.

171) The Supreme Brahman which is to be known from the Upanishads, has thus been expounded by me and there is nothing more to be known. Like Sage Pippalada, I have said this in order to remove the idea that may lurk in your mind that there is yet something more to be known.

172) Prostrating before the preceptor, the disciple said: 'O Lord, you have taken me to the other shore of this ocean of mundane existence with the waters of birth and death, and whales in the form of pleasure and pain, through the boat of the essence of all spiritual Knowledge'.

173) 'I am now enjoying the ocean of Bliss, revelling in the Atman. I have achieved the Supreme Goal and am completely quiescent, supremely indifferent and absorbed in the One Being. Having known the nature of the sense-objects as unreal, like the waters of the mirage, I now pooh-pooh them, and I shall wander on the face of the earth along with you'.

174) 'O Lord, I shall, till the end of my life, carry on in this body by serving you. What more can I do!' said the disciple.

175) After hearing the dialogue between the Preceptor and disciple, I have composed this Sruti-sara- samuddharanam which stands on

a par with the Vedas. He who studies this well and grasps its import properly, will not again fall into the ocean of birth and death.o

176) This book should be studied by those great souls who have intense devotion to their preceptors, and not by others, because only to the former, the Vedic truths given by the preceptor reveal themselves. Therefore, one should study this from one's preceptor with great devotion.

177) The Upanishad Mantra beginning with 'He who has supreme devotion to God...' has also said that what is instructed by the preceptor reveals itself only to that high-souled one who has great devotion to the preceptor. Therefore, this book should be studied by those who have devotion to their preceptors.

178) Again and again, till the end of my life I offer my prostrations at the lotus-feet of that most adorable preceptor (Acharya Sankara), the foremost among the Paramahamsas, who through the sun of supreme Knowledge, has completely destroyed the darkness of my primeval nescience, the cause of my whirling in the swing of never-ceasing chain of births and deaths, who grants immediate liberation, through Knowledge, to those disciples possessed of qualifications like the knowledge of the Sruti, control of mind, humility and the rest and who make complete self-surrender to him.

179) I offer my prostrations to the all-pervasive Supreme Isvara, the Lord, whose two lotus-feet are this earth, whose belly is the sky, whose vital force is the air, eyes the sun and the moon, ears the directions, head the heaven, mouth the fire, and kidney the ocean, in whose bosom lies the whole universe with all the celestials, human beings, animals, birds, reptiles, semi-divine beings, demons, and others sporting themselves, most wonderfully, and whose body is thus the three worlds.

Dedicated

To

Gurubhagawan

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj

REVELATION OF THE EVER-REVEALED

Section I

PROLEGOMENA

GURU, GOD AND THE ABSOLUTE

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा
गुरुर्विष्णुगुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः
। गुरुरेव परं ब्रह्म तस्मै
श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

Gurur-brahma Gurur-vishnur-gurur-devo Mahesvarah, Gurureva Param Brahma Tasmai Sriguruve Namah. "Guru is Brahma (the Creator of the Universe), Guru is Vishnu (the Protector), Guru is Lord Mahesvara (the Destroyer), Guru verily is the Supreme Brahman (the Absolute) - prostrations to that Guru." This verse occurs in the famous Guru-Gita which is in the form of a dialogue between Goddess Uma and Lord Siva, in the Sanatkumara Samhita in the Skanda Purana. The first half of the second line 'Gurureva Param Brahma (Guru verily is the Supreme Brahman)' is popularly chanted as 'Gurussakshat Param Brahma' which means Guru is the visible Supreme Brahman. The verse sums up the relation of one's spiritual preceptor and the God he worships with the Absolute which transcends all relationship. It establishes in no uncertain terms the complete identity in essence of the three entities. To the neophyte in the spiritual path, this may appear to be unbelievable, unorthodox and almost sceptical. But this is the truth which he has to understand and digest, sooner or later, before he can make any appreciable progress in his march towards the Goal.

Many may be familiar with the two terms 'Guru' and 'God' and may not have heard about 'the Absolute' at all. Their conception of Guru is limited to the physical personality of the spiritual teacher. What they understand by the term 'God' may be some superhuman person residing in some far-off world in space, in charge of the welfare of

the good and the punishment of the evil in this world. These are not wrong ideas. They are correct as far as they go; but they do not envisage the full significance of the two terms 'Guru' and 'God' which is expected to be possessed by a spiritual seeker.

The highest Truth is always couched in the most cryptic and enigmatic terms in the scriptures, even as we keep very valuable gems locked up in strong steel-boxes, placed in equally strong if not stronger encasements one within the other. One such expression is the oft-quoted Rig-Vedic Mantra 'Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti- The Absolute is one, the wise call It by different names.' All the remaining Mantras in the Vedas and other scriptures may be said to be a commentary on this central Vedic teaching. This manifested world, consisting of countless universes with umpteen names and forms is really the Absolute itself. The apparently divergent universe is in fact an organic whole, as it were, even as our body consisting of different limbs is one complete whole by itself non-different from ourselves. Nobody feels that his hands are separate from him. Similarly his other organs, - both the motor organs and the sense-organs as also his internal organ called the mind-, are considered non-different from himself, although for certain empirical dealings, he speaks about them as though they are different parts. The most awe-inspiring fact which the Vedas reveal is that this world is God Himself. It is His body, the Virat Purusha. It is His cosmic form. As my body is non-different from me, even so this world as the body of God is the same as God who Himself is the manifestation of the transcendent Absolute.

Therefore, we come to the conclusion that one's spiritual preceptor and the God one worships are in essence identical, being the manifestations of the non-dual Absolute, the former a visible manifestation perceivable to the physical sense-organs and the latter an invisible one conceivable through one's intellect and

experienced in one's heart. To the sincere and faithful devotee the invisible God does also manifest Himself in visible forms, in meditation. The Puranas are replete with instances of God descending down to our physical plane assuming various names and forms and fulfilling certain cosmic functions when needs arise. These Puranas and epics are great scriptures explaining the truths of the Upanishads which are unapproachable to the worldly-minded. They are not cock and bull stories intended for the old and orthodox and the not-very-rationalistic. Their importance, especially to the spiritual seeker, is revealed in a famous verse which says that Vedas dread those persons who approach them without a preliminary knowledge of the epics and Puranas. A clear understanding of the implied meaning of these scriptures is a 'must' for a seeker for his successful grasp of the higher truths hidden in the Vedas. This most important instruction about the essential non-difference of the spiritual teacher, God and the non-dual Absolute is given to us in one of the verses in praise of Lord Dakshinamurti which says that God, Guru and the Atman are different only in their names and forms and that they mean and represent the one, non- dual Supreme Absolute whose body is all-pervasive like the ether.

The necessity of a spiritual preceptor in flesh and blood and an omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent God who can be conceived by the mind and therefore worshipped and meditated upon, besides the eternal, non-dual, transcendental Absolute who is beyond the reach of the mind and speech and whose manifestations are the first two, to the spiritual aspirant, cannot be over-emphasised. Hence, it has become a tradition among the aspirants to pay the greatest respect and adoration to their spiritual instructor, equivalent to those which they bestow on the Deity-their object of daily worship. Some ultra-modern Acharyas in their over-anxiety to decry everything that is old and traditional, and to bring in something new to their hearers, preach about the superfluity of

Guru and God in the scheme of Self-realisation. They bring before their audience hair-splitting arguments and very subtle reasoning to convince them about their revolutionary theory. They seem to forget that in their very act of denying the necessity of a Guru, they themselves act as Gurus to their listeners, and thereby they nullify their own theory.

To quote again the great Guru-Gita, three verses therein (60 to 62) explain how the Guru illumines the highest truth of the identity of the Atman and Brahman, the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, contained in the Maha Vakya 'Tat Tvam Asi' and thus helps the disciple in the realisation of the non-dual Absolute.

All these facts contained in the preceding paragraphs and much more are beautifully condensed in one short single verse by Sage Totakacharya which forms the opening Sloka of his work known as 'Sruti-sara- samuddharanam':

त्रैलोक्यनाथहररमीड्यमुदारसत्त्वं,

शक्तेस्तनूजतनयं परमेष्ठिकल्पम्।

जीमूतमुक्तवमलाम्बरचारुवर्णं,

वासिष्ठमुग्रतपसं प्रणतोस्मि नित्यम्॥१

Trailokyanathaharim-idyam-udarasattvam

Saktestanujatanayam parameshtikalpam Jimutamukta-vimalambara-charuvarnam

Vasishtham-ugratapasam pranatosmi nityam. (1)

A crude rendering of this verse in English would be as follows: "I always offer obeisance to the great Sage Vyasa who is God Hari Himself, the Lord of the three worlds, worthy of praise, the embodiment of pure Sattva Guna, the grandson of Sakti, equal to

Brahma the Creator, of beautiful colour like the pure sky free of all clouds, a descendant of Sage Vasishtha, and of extreme penance."

Scholars differ in the interpretation of this verse. Some would say that all the epithets used therein qualify Sage Vyasa who is invoked. Some others opine that it is Lord Vishnu and Sage Vyasa who are referred to by the Acharya. Still others argue that Brahman the Absolute, Lord Hari Its Saguna aspect and Sage Veda-Vyasa who is none other than the Lord, all the three are invoked in this opening verse.

Vedanta declares that Brahman is both the material and instrumental cause of the universe, from whom it is projected like an illusory show of a magician, in whom it appears to subsist and into whom it merges as it were. Lord Hari is the manifestation of Brahman and is so called because He destroys the primeval nescience with all its ramifications in the form of the three worlds, viz., this world, the heavenly one and the intermediate one, usually called the Bhuh, Bhuvah and Svah in the scriptures. In the Adhyatmic sense, the three worlds are the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, through which runs like the thread in a garland, the Turiya, the Absolute transcending the three states. The Trinities, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva also known as Hiranyagarbha, Virat and Isvara in the universal aspect and Taijasa, Visva and Prajna in the individual aspect, respectively, nay, all the gods and goddesses referred to in the scriptures are the manifestations of the one Absolute. Thus through the epithets used in the first line of the verse, the Acharya refers to the identity that lies hidden in the terms 'the Absolute' and 'God' in His Nirguna and Saguna aspects.

The remaining epithets make explicit reference to Sage Veda-Vyasa, as the grandson of Sage Sakti, equal to Brahma, pure as the cloudless sky, belonging to the family of Vasishtha and as a great Tapasvin. This idea of identifying Sage Vyasa with the omniscient

Lord cannot be new to the aspirant-world who are conversant with the epics and Puranas. We have for example the following verse:

अचतुवरर्दनो ब्ह्मा र्िबाहुरपरो हररः ।

अफाललोचनः शम्ु ग्वान् ◌ बार्दरायणः

Achaturvadano Brahma Dvibahuraparo Harih Aphalalochanah Sambhuh Bhagavan Badarayanah.

"Sage Vyasa is God Himself, he is Brahma without four faces, he is another Vishnu with two hands, and he is Lord Siva without the third eye on the forehead." A very popular Dhyana Sloka among the devotees says:

व्यासाय र्वष्णुरूपाय व्यासरूपाय र्वष्णवे

नमो वै ब्ह्मर्नधये वार्सिाय नमो नमः ॥

Vyasaya Vishnurupaya Vyasarupaya Vishnave Namo vai Brahmanidhaye Vasishthaya namo namah.

"Prostrations to Sage Vyasa in the form of Lord Vishnu and to Lord Vishnu in the form of Vyasa. Prostrations again and again to that repository of Brahma-Jnana, belonging to the family of Sage Vasishtha." Sage Vyasa, the author of 'Brahma-Sutras' and Acharya Sankara, their commentator, are identified with Lord Narayana and Lord Siva respectively in the following Vyaso-Narayanah Sakshat, Sankarah Sankarah.' Similarly we have another for the verse:

शंकरं शंकराचायं केशवं बार्दरायणम् ◌।

सूत्र्ष्यकृतौ वन्र्दे ग्वन्तौ पुनः पुनः ।।

Sankaram Sankaracharyam Kesavam Badarayanam Sutra-bhashyakritau vande Bhagavantau punah punah. The verse of Sri Totakacharya referred to supra, recalls to our minds the traditional Guru-Parampara beginning right from Lord

Narayana, the Supreme Absolute, up to Sage Vyasa, with Brahma, Vasishtha, Sakti and Parasara in between. Unshakable faith in the truth about the essential basic identity of one's own Preceptor and Ishta Devata (tutelary deity) with the transcendental Absolute is a sine qua non for the spiritual seeker to ensure success in his march towards the goal of Self-realisation, the acme of all human aspirations.

WHO IS A DISCIPLE?

The word 'Sishyah' in Sanskrit means a disciple who learns under the feet of the Guru, the spiritual preceptor, the highest Knowledge which is Brahma-Vidya or the Knowledge of Atman-Brahman. The dictionary meaning of the word 'disciple' is 'one who professes to receive instruction from another, one who follows or believes in the doctrine of another, a follower especially one of the twelve apostles of Christ'. While a disciple may be said to be also a student or a pupil, all students or pupils cannot be said to be disciples in the strict sense of the term.

Who is a disciple? Or, in other words, what are the special qualifications required of a student to call himself a disciple to make him fit to approach a spiritual preceptor and get himself initiated into the mysteries of the Supreme Truth. The answer to this question is given in the second verse and the first part of the third verse:

सकलं मनसा र्ियया ज़र्नतं

समवेक्ष्य र्वनार्शतया तु जगत् ◌्।

र्नरर्वद्यत कर्ि्दतो र्नर्ि्ला

र्दर्वनार्शकृतेन न लभ्यमर्त॥ २

Sakalam manasa kriyaya janitam

samavekshya vinasitaya tu jagat,

Niravidyata kaschidato nikhilad-

avinasi kritena na labhyam-iti.

प्रतर्पत्सु रसावर्वनार्शंपद्ं

यर्तधमरतो यर्तमेव गुरुम

वर्र्दतात्म-सतत्त्वमुपेत्य कर्वं

प्रर्णपत्य र्नवेर्र्दतवान्स्वमतांम् ॥३

Pratipitsu-rasavavinasipadam

yatidharmarato yatim-eva gurum,

Viditatmasatattvam-upetya kavim

pranipatya niveditavan svamatam.

-meaning, "a rare person reflects well in his mind over the perishable nature of all the worlds attainable through Karmas; he rightly comes to know that Immortality cannot be attained through Karmas; thereupon he gets dispassion for all objects which are produced out of Karmas; he finds pleasure in leading the life of a renunciate with all its prescribed conduct of righteousness and virtue and becomes possessed of aspiration for liberation from the wheel of this transmigratory life".

The verse may be said to be an echo of the famous Mantra of the Kathopanishad (I-2-xii) which says: "A specially qualified disciple should examine the nature of all the worlds attainable through actions and, having thereby understood that the Eternal cannot be got through the non-eternal Karmas, should get dispassion; and thereafter for the sole purpose of attaining the Supreme, should approach, in the proper manner a preceptor who is both a Vedic

scholar who has grasped the import of the Vedas and a realised sage established in the Absolute".

It is the well-known fourfold qualifications (Sadhana Chatushtaya) prescribed by the Vedantic texts that are referred, here, both in the Upanishadic Mantra and the Acharya's verse, viz., Viveka, Vairagya, Shat-Sampat and Mumukshutva.

Before taking the first step in the spiritual path, the seeker is expected to know well his destination. It is the absence of this knowledge about the final Goal, which is nothing less than the Absolute, that misleads many an aspirant who, proceeding through wrong routes, gets stranded on the way. The seeker should at this stage acquire a clear intellectual knowledge of the nature of the Eternal as distinguished from its counterpart which is the whole of the non-eternal. "The Absolute alone is real and everything else in this universe is unreal', 'Whatever that is seen is perishable', 'I am verily the Absolute', 'The Truth is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute' - these are only a few among similar innumerable declarations of the sages and scriptures. The Reality, says the Mundaka Upanishad Mantra (II-1-ii), is that Purusha who is divine, formless, existing inside and outside, unborn, free from the vital force (Prana) and mind and greater than the great Unmanifest. An object of this description cannot be found in this world. Even a clear mental conception of an idea of the said characteristics is impossible. This is so because what is implied through the words of the Mantra is, beyond the realm of the sense-organs and the mind in its present stage of evolution in the seeker. Where can we then find this Reality? This question presumes that the object of search is located somewhere in space. This is not the case and hence a definite answer to this question has not been given so far by anyone. Some of the seemingly puzzling statements in the scriptures have to be taken as guide-lights illuminating the path leading to the Truth. One such statement is: 'It (the Absolute) is in

everything and everything is in the Absolute'. Another declaration says: 'Everything is in Me (the Absolute) but I am not in them'. These and similar assertions, though apparently contradicting, are attempts of the scriptures to answer the question. The Mantra of the Mundaka Upanishad immediately following the one cited above, gives a commentary, as it were, to these enigmatic statements. It states: "This is the Universal Self, the Virat whose head is the effulgent heavens, whose eyes are the sun and the moon, whose ears are the quarters of space, whose speech is the revealed knowledge, whose vital energy is the air, whose mind is this universe and whose feet are the earth". This also is not a direct reply to the question, but a figurative one to show the universal nature of the Absolute Consciousness.

Now, what is the nature of the non-eternal from which the eternal Absolute of the above-nature has to be discriminated by the seeker? The scriptures use the word Mithya as the characteristic nature of this universal phenomenon when considered as a separate entity from the Absolute. Everything other than the Reality is termed Mithya. Mithya does not mean complete non-existence or outright unreality though, everything other than the Reality is included under this category. The empirical world of names and forms which we perceive externally through the sense-organs and which we consider as something concrete and real is classified under Mithya as it cannot stand the test of reality in all the three periods of time and under all conditions. The dream-world and erroneous perceptions like the rope-snake, double-moon, etc., which appear as real at the time of perception but which vanish when we wake up or when the cause of the illusion is removed, also come under Mithya. As a third category under Mithya we have the hare's horns, the son of a barren woman, etc., which are mere ideas in the mind without the corresponding objects outside as in the first two categories. They are not completely non-existent, for at the mere

hearing of the words 'hare's horns', a mental image is formed which is a complex of the images of the objects represented through the meanings of the two words 'hare' and 'horns'. As a matter of fact, Vedanta establishes that there cannot be what is called a complete non-existence in the real sense of the term, as counter to Existence, since even in the very reference to non-existence we have already accepted its existence. Thus 'Existence' persists in all the above-categories of Mithya and even in non-existence like the thread in a garland of assorted flowers. The flowers are supported by the thread which is veiled by the very flowers themselves. Similarly, all names and forms have their support on the pure Existence which is, as it were, covered by them. The whole universe with its countless objects and concepts of all categories, which appears as existing but does not persist for all times, when seen as though separate from the Reality, is termed Mithya. The underlying pure Existence free of all objectivity and subjectivity is the only Reality.

With this discrimination of the Real from the unreal, the Eternal from the non-eternal, the seeker comes to the conclusion that all sense-pleasures in all the worlds are of perishable nature. And he is after something permanent which can give him eternal happiness and which can free him from all pain and misery once for all. The scriptures are the only guide at the present stage and all of them say in one voice that what he longs for can be had only in the Supreme Reality. How to get at It which seems to be far off and almost unattainable? What has to be done in the matter? Here again the scriptures alone can help him. They say that this Reality Supreme, being eternal, existing always without a beginning and an end, and having therefore no birth and death can never be produced or created anew through any Karma. Karmas whatever be their nature and magnitude are productive of only transient and temporary results which come under four main groups, viz., production, acquisition, purification and modification. Fruits of actions

beginning from the most trivial ones such as getting a pittance from the day's labour, right up to Brahma Loka, the highest world of the Creator, can be brought under one or the other of the above four classes, and even as the enjoyment with the money earned is spent up the next day, happiness in the world of Brahma also will cease some day or other when the merit of the Karmas done to attain it is exhausted. Scriptures have not included the final goal of Liberation among the results of Karmas. When this conviction takes firm root in the seeker, he naturally, as a matter of course, without great effort, becomes free from the desire for the fruits of actions coming under the four groups and as a consequence, Karmas lose their hold on him.

There is room for a lot of misunderstanding on this subject. For, the questions whether the seeker should engage himself in Karmas or not, and in the former case when he has to do them, how he should perform them, arise in the case of every sincere Sadhaka. The answers depend upon the evolution of each seeker, the stage at which he stands in the ladder of spiritual progress. No standardised reply applicable to all at all stages, is prescribed in the scriptures, nor is it possible to do so. It is always safer to take personal instructions from one's own preceptor and be guided by him. Performance of one's own duties in consonance with one's status and stage in society in which one is placed cannot and should not be discontinued in the name of renunciation. Renunciation of Karmas comes of itself to the sincere seeker after a particular stage in his Sadhana. If it is brought about prematurely through mistaken or partial understanding of the declarations of the scriptures, it will do more harm than good and the aspirant's progress will be retarded rather than accelerated.

The knowledge about the real nature of the Supreme Goal one has to reach and a firm conviction about the phenomenal nature of the worlds in which one lives and goes on transmigrating, result in the

dawn of dispassion (Vairagya) for the enjoyment of sense-pleasures produced as the fruits of Karmas here and hereafter. The seeker comes to know the real source of these pleasures which he has till now been attributing to the objects due to ignorance. He is now convinced that all sense-enjoyments, whether of this world or of the heavens, are only distorted and diluted forms of a ray of the real bliss of the Supreme, his final Goal. He, therefore, ruthlessly renounces all pleasurable objects of the three worlds as mere tinsels, even as the wise young Nachiketas of the Kathopanishad did when tempted by Lord Yama Dispassion not born out of real discrimination but of wrong understanding of the instructions in the scriptures lands many aspirants in the torture of the physical body in the name of spiritual austerity. In the place of excessive indulgence in sense-objects the other extreme of starving the senses is resorted to. This is a common mistake prevalent among sincere Sadhakas. Both the extremes are equally harmful and are great obstructions in the onward march to the Goal. Too much of fasting without allowing even the minimum nourishment required for keeping the bodyamin a diseaseless condition and too much consumption of tasty dishes are both not conducive to Yoga. Similarly, over-concentration on costly and gaudy dresses, and moving about stark naked are both extremes to be avoided by a wise seeker. Not a few among sincere aspirants practise nudity by resorting to seclusion, wrongly thinking that it will lead them to the 'Nirvana' referred to in the scriptures. Lady Saint Bhakta Mira Bai has in one of her famous songs brought to relief the necessity of moderation in all spiritual Sadhana. She says that if salvation could be attained by living on milk alone, all calves would have been liberated, for they solely depend on the milk of the mother cow; if one could get liberation by standing in neck-deep water in the Ganga, all the fishes which remain fully immersed in that water are to be liberated first. She goes on citing similar examples of misdirected practices and exhorts the aspirants to the right type of

Sadhana. While milk diet, bath in the Ganga, satisfying with frugal dress, etc., are certainly conducive to spiritual progress, any fanatic and immoderate act will only retard it. Equipoise or a state of balance (Samatva) is Yoga-says the Bhagavadgita.

Viveka and Vairagya are interrelated and they may even be said to be the two sides of the same coin. Viveka opens the eyes, as it were,
which enables a clear vision of the true nature of objects, and Vairagya further clarifies the vision and helps to have a deeper insight into the illusions of mundane life. To the seeker who is possessed of these two, viz., right discrimination and wise dispassion, Shat-Sampat, the six virtues of Sama, Dama, Titiksha, Uparati, Sraddha and Samadhana (control of mind, restraint of the senses, power of endurance, satiety in sense-enjoyment, faith in God, Guru, scriptures and Self, and concentration of mind, respectively) become easy of attainment, because he is convinced of the fundamental truth about the nature of the Supreme, which forms the basis for all virtues. He is aware of the presence of that Reality in every being, animate and inanimate, and also of the phenomenal nature of the names and forms which veil, as it were, that Reality. He is not therefore attracted by the sense-objects. When once this is made possible, a'! virtues follow. His mind is not drawn towards pleasure, his senses do not rush towards their respective objects, he feels a satisfaction with the minimum creature-comforts, he is not disturbed violently by the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, good and bad, pain and pleasure, etc., he surrenders to the Supreme Power which he knows is shaping the destiny of the universe and as a result of all these his mind becomes calm like the still waters of a lake when there is no breeze.

Scriptures do not stop with the above three qualifications of Viveka, Vairagya and Shat-Sampat, but insists on one more, viz., Mumukshutva, an ardent aspiration for liberation from this

metempsychosis. One may possess all the above-said three qualifications and if he does not have this fourth one, there is every likelihood of missing the Goal. The wealthy and affluent section in the world lead a seemingly successful life, and the creation of a sincere desire for God-realisation in them is almost an impossible feat, for they feel themselves quite all right with their big bank balance, bungalows, wife and children. The poor who are undergoing all sorts of suffering are too much absorbed in earning the daily bread to think of the higher values of life. Hence it is said that Mumukshutva arises only very rarely in those who have earned merit as a result of virtuous Karmas performed during crores of lives. An aspirant takes to Advaita philosophy only through the grace of the Lord says the Avadhuta Gita. The reason for the failure and stagnation of many in the spiritual path may be attributed to want of this qualification of Mumukshutva. In spite of remaining within the precincts of holy Ashrams for a number of years and practising Asana and Pranayama, Svadhyaya and Japa, selfless work and Upanishad study, many feel disappointed and return back to worldly life, because they lack in this important prerequisite for Liberation. The Ashram atmosphere appears comfortable for a few months or even years but becomes a drudgery thereafter to such Sadhakas for the main reason that they have no real yearning for Liberation.

The preliminary practices of Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama and Pratyahara of the Ashtanga Yoga, the complete self-surrender to God or one's own tutelary deity required of a devotee belonging to the Bhakti cult, the unselfish performance of Karmas and serving others without the least expectation of any recompense in return, prescribed for those who practise Karma Yoga, and the practice of similar virtues and morality enjoined in the scriptures encompass within them the essence of the Sadhana Chatushtaya alone. The minimum prerequisites for a disciple for entering the spiritual path,

enunciated by the great Acharya Sankara, viz., study of scriptures, performance of one's duties without desire for their results dedicating them to God, giving up desires, expiation of sins, reflection over the defects inherent in all sense-pleasures, a firm resolve to attain Liberation, company of the wise, self-surrender to God, cultivation of the Shat-Sampat and renunciation of selfish Karmas and their fruits, also refer only to the Sadhana Chatushtaya. It is said of Sage Vedavyasa that he has, in his monumental Mahabharata, covered all subjects a human being should know without leaving anything unsaid, so much so, everything has become 'Vyasocchishta', meaning that whatever any one may speak on any subject, it will only be what Sri Vyasa has already said. Similar is the case with Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj who, in his more than three hundred books, which all put together will not lag behind the Mahabharata either in their Volume or in their contents, has covered all that his disciples should know for their successful march towards the goal of Self-realisation. The triplet of the twenty spiritual instructions, the spiritual resolves and the spiritual diary insisted upon by him, and often referred to as 'Siva's Trisul', also deals with the same fourfold Sadhana essentially. The difference among them is only in words and not in matter. All scriptures of all religions more or less insist on these qualifications for a disciple and they are never tired of repeating them again and again which show their great importance to all sincere Sadhakas.

PRECEPTOR-DISCIPLE-RELATION

The Kathopanishad belonging to the Krishna Yajurveda says in one of its Mantras that to the many the Absolute is not available even for the sake of hearing; that those few who get a chance of hearing do not understand It because of their unpurified intellect; that the preceptor, Its expounder, is verily a rare, unique and wonderful soul and that even among the very few proficient disciples who get

a chance of hearing about It, only a rare one who is instructed by an adept, a Srotriya Brahmanishtha, becomes a Knower. The Knowledge Supreme, the means of imparting It, the preceptor who imparts It and the disciple who receives It-all of them are eulogised by the scriptures as rare wonders. The real relation that exists between such a preceptor and disciple is also a mystery. The voice of God which comes through the preceptor is not heard because of the shouting of the senses. Only a self-controlled disciple instructed by his preceptor is able to hear it. He collects the rays of his purified mind freed of all sense-desires and focuses them on the Goal, when he realises that this world with all its apparent diversities including the mind and the senses and their corresponding objects is an aperture, as it were, through which God peeps. None of the objects is meant for possession by any, but each one of them if studied in the proper manner would reveal the Supreme Truth which lies hidden under their names and forms. The very objects, which in our ignorance appear as obstacles to our progress, become gateways to the Great Beyond. This transformation in the disciple's mind is brought about by the Master through his contact in a most mysterious manner which transcends all logic and reason.

The scriptures are replete with examples of ideal spiritual preceptors and disciples who have been responsible for the spiritual fire being kept ablaze with all its self-effulgence. The Kathopanishad gives a pair in the personages of Lord Yama and the young boy Nachiketas. In the Srimad Bhagavata we have another pair in Sage Sukadeva and King Parikshit. The Suka-rahasya Upanishad gives the story of Lord Siva instructing the young Suka into the mysteries of Gayatri Mantra. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad contains the instances of the Sun-god imparting the highest Knowledge to his worthy disciple Yajnavalkya; and later, Sage Yajnavalkya himself imparting the same Knowledge to King Janaka and to his own wife Maitreyi, and

Sage Dadhyang Atharvan instructing the Aswins. Similar exemplary pairs in Prajapati and Indra, Sage Uddalaka and his son Svetaketu, the great Sanatkumara and Narada, Raikva and King Janasruti, Gautama and Satyakama Jabala, we get in the Chhandogya Upanishad. Again, we come across Sage Angiras and his disciple Saunaka in the Mundaka Upanishad, the venerable Sage Pippalada and the six learned disciples Sukesa and others in the Prasna Upanishad, and Varuna and his son Bhrigu in the Taittiriya Upanishad. We have again Sage Vasishtha and Sri Rama in the Yoga-Vasishtha, and Lord Krishna and Arjuna in the Mahabharata. Many more can be cited from the scriptures. In the not remote past, the cases of the great Acharya Sankara and his four direct disciples, Sri Padmapadacharya, Sri Suresvaracharya, Sri Totakacharya and Sri Hastamalakacharya, the Tibetan Yogi Marpa and his disciple Milarepa, and Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Vivekananda in Bengal are fresh in our memory. In our contemporary period also similar pairs of worthy preceptors and equally worthy disciples are not wanting and their names will certainly be recorded in the history of Guru-Sishya-Parampara, the line of preceptors and disciples.

In all these cases, the most striking point for the spiritual seekers to note and emulate is the high standard of ethical and moral perfection, the iron will and mettle and the burning aspiration for liberation possessed by the disciples without exception. The mere hearing of the tremendous sacrifice made and the untold physical and mental pains suffered by some of them in the pretty long list given above, makes us shudder and is enough to open our eyes to the naked truth of the not-very-satisfactory condition of many of us and the very low level where we really stand as far as spiritual Sadhana is concerned. The extreme patience, infinite compassion, cosmic love, absence of even traces of selfishness and complete

readiness to share the Supreme Knowledge at great risks, risks of even losing one's life, are seen common in all the Masters.

Often, neophytes in the spiritual path do not conceal their disappointment in not being able to get Srotriya Brahmanishthas to guide them and go to the extent of attributing all their failure and stagnation to their teachers. Their egoism prevents them from admitting their own drawbacks and shortcomings which really stand in their way of progress. Masters also feel highly depressed to find that seldom sincere aspirants approach them and even those few who go to them are of very low standard as they are found lacking very much in the basic virtues of Yama and Niyama. Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj once said: "To find out a Guru who may sincerely look after the interests of the disciple is very difficult in the world. It is quite true, but to find a disciple who may sincerely act according to the instructions of the Guru is very, very difficult in this world". The transmission of the highest Knowledge from which the preceptor to the disciple is a supra-logical process cannot be satisfactorily explained through reasoning. The preceptor's instructions help the removal of the innumerable layers of false superimpositions that cover the Truth as it were, which when completed, the self-resplendent Atman shines by itself. Though the Self alone can reveal the Self, one cannot obviate the necessity of a preceptor as he alone can safely guide the disciple on the path which is beset with pitfalls and obstacles at every step. To quote Sri Gurudev again, he once said to one of his disciples: "I am glad to note that you believe in the Self within. No doubt, He who lives in your heart is your real Guru. A personal Guru is also necessary. The spiritual path is beset with many obstacles. The Guru who has already trodden the path will guide the aspirant safely and remove all obstacles and difficulties". Only a perfected soul can ignite the spiritual fire in the qualified disciple and make it blaze forth into a conflagration to consume the

nescience with its delusion and the feeling of the existence of a separate world apart from the Self. Still, it is not necessary for the sincere seekers to wait for such perfected souls to start their spiritual practice. For, when they are fully ripe for the final dawn of Knowledge, the Supreme will manifest Itself either in the form of an external preceptor or otherwise and initiate them. A high school student can guide a pupil in the primary school, and one studying in a college can be a teacher to a high school boy. A Master of Arts or a Ph. D. is not necessary for primary and high school classes. This is true in the spiritual path also. Senior Sadhakas and Sannyasins who have covered a long distance in their march towards the Goal can be of help and service to their juniors and fresh entrants.

Sri Suresvaracharya in his Naishkarmya Siddhi classifies spiritual seekers into four classes. Under the first category he cites the case of Hiranyagarbha, the first-born, whose birth is a perfected one with the knowledge of the unity even without any instruction due to the results of Karmas in his previous lives. Those seekers who have prepared the ground well for the dawn of Knowledge in their past births and get illumination by hearing the instructions once from their preceptors in this birth, come under the second group. A ghost which was seated in the flagpost of Arjuna's chariot in the Mahabharata battle-field at Kurukshetra, which is also the Dharma Kshetra, is said to have attained illumination by merely hearing the Lord's instructions to Arjuna contained in the immortal song of Srimad Bhagavad-Gita. One of the Janakas of the Videha Kingdom is cited as another example of this group in whom the Knowledge dawned by hearing once the sublime conversation on Atma-Jnana from some Siddhas. The third-class seekers are those who realise the Truth through repeated instructions from the preceptor like Svetaketu of the Chhandogya Upanishad who was instructed by his father on the import of the Maha-Vakya 'Tat-Tvam-Asi', nine

times. The fourth group are those who get illumination through penance, concentration and meditation on the Maha-vakyas as in the case of Bhrigu mentioned in the Taittiriya Upanishad. Difference among the above four groups is seen because we, through our ignorance, detach the present life from the otherwise continuous chain of existence which has no beginning, and ends only with the dawn of Perfect Wisdom. Spiritual evolution (rather involution) is a long process extending to a number of lives. How much effort a seeker has to put forth in this life depends upon what he has already finished in his previous lives and what remains a balance thereof.

Though, as a rule, the highest Knowledge is imparted by a preceptor in the fourth order of Sannyasa to a disciple who is also initiated into the same order, instances are not wanting when this rule is relaxed. In several cases both the preceptor and disciple are seen to belong to the other three orders of Brahmacharya, Grihastha and Vanaprastha. Kings ruling over vast dominions and leading a householder's life have acted as preceptors of the Supreme Knowledge. The Knowledge was not refused to them when they approached their preceptors, as they were found to be fully qualified disciples although they had not been formally initiated into the Sannyasa order. Preference is however given to the last order of Sannyasa evidently because those in the other three orders cannot, by the very nature of the prescribed duties of their respective orders, be expected to be whole-time spiritual Sadhakas. The duties and responsibilities attached to the three orders are causes of distraction. And Brahmabhyasa demands from the disciple full time attention and that of a wholehearted nature. The complete personality of the aspirant, i.e., his body, senses, vital force, mind and intellect should jointly and harmoniously work freed of all kinds of tensions. Compared to the other three orders, the Sannyasa order is best fitted for this most difficult task.

The author gives as a short description of the spiritual preceptor whom the disciple should approach, how the latter should approach him and what he should do thereafter. This is contained in the latter portion of the third verse (vide page 13) and in the fourth verse:

ग्वन्नुर्दधौ मृर्तजन्मजले,

सिुरुदुःझिषे पर्ततं व्यर्थतम् ◌्।

कृपया शरणागतमुद्धरमा

मनुशाध्युपसन्नमनन्यगर्तीम् ◌्॥४

Bhagavannudadhau mritijanmajale

sukha-duhkha-jhashe patitam vyathitam

Kripaya saranagatam-uddhara mam

anusadhi-upasannam-ananyagatim.

-meaning "a qualified aspirant possessed of the fourfold qualifications of Vedantic discipline which includes a clear discrimination of the Eternal from the non-eternal, non-attachment, self-control and an irrepressible hankering after the realisation of the Supreme, who is interested in leading the life of a renunciate, should approach, in the proper manner, a spiritual preceptor who has himself realised the Supreme, who is all-knowing in the sense that he knows the essence that underlies everything in this phenomenal world and who is a Sannyasin. Prostrating himself before the preceptor, the disciple should explain his position and the purpose for which he has come and what he wants, in a most humble manner: 'O Lord, I have fallen into the ocean of Samsara infested with whales and other aquatic creatures in the form of pain and pleasure. I am greatly afflicted and I am anxious to get out of this quagmire of earthly existence. I take shelter under your holy feet. I have no other refuge .except you whom I have approached.

Kindly condescend to instruct me for my final liberation and lift me from the waters of this transmigratory life'."

The scriptures prescribe the procedure to be followed by the disciple in approaching his preceptor and submitting his prayer. The disciple should not go empty-handed. He should be a 'Samit-pani', i.e., he should carry as offering a bundle of faggots-dried twigs of certain particular trees such as sacred peepal and others used in sacrificial oblations. This is indicative of other serviceable articles also and above all, it stands for all the desires of the disciple along with the Vasanas and Samskaras lying hidden in the subconscious and unconscious levels of his mind, the feelings of 'I' and 'mine', all tied up into a bundle and made ready to be offered in the great fire of Atman-Brahman Knowledge to be kindled by the preceptor.

Being a qualified disciple he cannot commit the common mistake of praying for this and that, the sense-objects which are mere tinsels and which deceive him. He cannot ask for cure of physical and mental ailments, or for progeny, or wealth, or promotion in office. Such prayers come only from the worldly-minded and not from those who have taken to the spiritual path after mature consideration and after acquiring the preliminary basic qualifications. Anyone who approaches the spiritual preceptor for anything except the final Liberation, is sure to be disappointed in the long run. And Liberation is sure to be attained by a sincere and qualified disciple through Sadhana under the guidance of the preceptor. The Muktikopanishad says that just as progeny is obtained through Putrakameshti sacrifice, wealth through trade and other similar means, and heaven through Jyotishtoma sacrifice, even so Jivanmukti is certainly attained through Samadhi arising from the Vedantic method of Sravana from one's own preceptor and Manana and Nididhyasana under his guidance. The unqualified disciple with his worldly scholarship and puffed-up egoism, may

ask questions to his preceptor either due to complete ignorance, or to exhibit his scholarship before the teacher or to test the knowledge of the teacher in a covert attempt to belittle him. But the qualified disciple who has no other desire than the realisation of the Absolute, is not a complete ignoramus, for he has got a theoretical knowledge of the import of the scriptures. His questions will therefore be based on the scriptural instructions alone. He is humble and does not therefore in the least like to pose himself as a learned man. His egoism has attenuated to a considerable extent and his self-surrender to the preceptor is almost complete that he could never even dream of testing the knowledge of his preceptor who is to him none other than God. He therefore prays to his preceptor only for the Knowledge of the Absolute. The Bhagavad- Gita verse IV-34 beautifully summarises all these facts. It says: "Know that (the Supreme Truth) by long prostration, by putting proper questions and by service of the Wise who have realised the Truth and who will instruct in that Knowledge". In commenting on this verse, Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj writes: "Go to the teachers (those who are well-versed in the scriptures dealing with Brahman or Brahma-srotris and who are established in Brahman or Brahma-nishthas). Prostrate yourself before them with profound humility and perfect devotion. Ask them questions: 'O Venerable Guru! What is the cause of bondage? How can I get liberation? What is the nature of ignorance? What is the nature of Knowledge? What is the Antaranga Sadhana (inward spiritual practice) for attaining Self-realisation?" Serve the Guru whole- heartedly. A teacher who is versed in the scriptures (Sastras) but who has no direct Self-realisation will not be able to help you in the attainment of the Knowledge of the Self. He who has knowledge of the scriptures and who is established in Brahman will be able to instruct you in that Knowledge and help you in the attainment of Self-realisation. Mere prostrations alone will not do. They may be tinged with hypocrisy. You must have perfect faith in

your Guru and his teaching. You must serve him wholeheartedly with great devotion. Now hypocrisy is not possible".

Section II

DISCRIMINATION

THE SUPREME GOAL

The spiritual preceptor, well-versed in the scriptural import and established in the non-dual, pure Consciousness, addressing his sincere and qualified disciple who has surrendered himself and prayed for Liberation and the means thereof, says:

वर्ननवत्यर रतं वषये वर्ष़मां

पररमुच्यशरीरर्नबद्धमर्तम् ॒।

परमात्मपर्दे व् र्नत्यऱतो

जर्ह मोहमयं भ्रममात्ममतेः ॥५

Vinivartya ratim vishaye vishamam

parimuchya sarira-nibaddha-matim,

Paramatma-pade bhava nityarato

jahi mohamayam bhramam-atmamateh.

र्वसृजान्नमयार्र्दषु पञ्चसुता

महमर्स्म ममेर्त मर्तं सततम् ॒।

दृर्शरूपमनन्तमृतं र्वगुणं

हृर्दयस्थमवेर्ह सर्दाहर्मर्त॥ ६

Visrija-annamayadishu panchasu

tamaham-asmi mameti matim satatam,

Drisi rupam-anantam-ritam vigunam

hridayastham-avehi sadaham-iti.

O disciple, resist all desire for enjoyment of sense-objects, which is the cause of misery in the form of transmigratory existence of birth, life and death in different species; do away with the wrong notion 'I am the body'; abandon delusion born out of your confused understanding through the awareness 'I am verily Brahman'; and experience the bliss of the supreme state of the Paramatman. Dismiss your feeling that the five sheaths (Pancha Kosas) are yourself or they are yours; and experience always 'I am the attributeless, Supreme Absolute seated in the heart, the pure Awareness, infinite, free of all limitations'.

The Taittiriya Upanishad says: "Speech along with the mind fails to reach That (the Supreme)". Here, the two organs, viz., speech and mind are indicative of all the organs. This means that both the external and internal organs in us are incapable of knowing the Reality. The Upanishads also instruct the seekers of Liberation to practise Sadhana of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana with a view to realise the Reality. To do this, the only available instruments given to man are the sense-organs, the mind and the intellect. If these are incapable of grasping the Truth, what is the way out? The import of Sruti texts has to be understood only with the help of one's own spiritual preceptor. There are other texts which declare: "Brahman can be attained only through the mind", "The Atman can be understood only from the Upanishads", "He who has a preceptor alone knows Brahman". The great Acharya Sankara also says: "That which cannot be known through all speech can be seen through the eye of the purified intellect".

The imparting of the final instructions by the preceptor, and the attainment of the supreme Truth by the disciple through those instructions, are both mysterious processes, which can be only experienced and not explained. Any amount of academic discussion and hair-splitting logic will not be of much help in this matter. Truth is beyond the realm of the intellect which illumines all objects outside it, but cannot illuminate itself, much less that which is beyond it and which transcends it. The attempt of the human intellect to know the Atman is sometimes compared to the attempt of a salt doll diving in the ocean to know the depth. The doll dissolves in the ocean and becomes one with it. The doll becomes the ocean thereby obviating the necessity to know the depth. Even so, the intellect when it succeeds to know the Reality, merges itself in It to become one with It, the non-dual, homogeneous Brahman beyond all relation.

One has to realise through direct experience that the innermost Reality in oneself and the Essence of the universe outside are not different. Through reasoning accepted by the scriptures, the seeker after Truth first negates everything objective as not the Reality which he is seeking for. At the end of this negation he arrives at the non-existence of this phenomenal universe. Reality being that which transcends existence and non-existence of this phenomena, the seeker has to eliminate the resultant non-existence also which has been arrived at through the process of discrimination. This final elimination cannot be done through the same process of reasoning, because the very faculty of reasoning itself has been eliminated in the earlier process of discrimination as an object coming under the phenomenal universe. Hence, the only resort to the seeker at this stage is the mystic Upanishadic teaching, which is capable of awakening him from the sleep of ignorance, even as the name of a man in sleep called aloud awakens him. The primeval nescience in the seeker drops off itself like a round fruit balanced at the tip of

one's nose falls to the ground at the slightest disturbance, says sage Suresvaracharya in this Naishkarmya Siddhi. With the initiation by the preceptor into the 'Tat Tvam Asi' Maha Vakya, the disciple attains direct experience of the Reality. The result is that he now experiences that the world and its non-existence which he eliminated through reasoning and through the Maha Vakya, respectively, are nothing but the Atman-Brahman, the non-dual, eternal Reality-Absolute. The question of pleasure and pain completely vanishes, because to him there is nothing other than the 'Self', the all-blissful Atman, the pure Awareness. Thus is one lifted out of the ocean of metempsychoses in this very life, even while living in the body.

Renunciation of attachment to sense-pleasures comes first and foremost among the several means for this transformation. Contact of the five sense-organs, the ear, skin, eye, palate and nose, with their corresponding objects, viz., sound, touch, form, taste and smell, respectively, produces a feeling of happiness under certain conditions. Desires therefore arise in the mind to repeat the contacts. It is these desires which cause Karmas which in their turn result in future births and deaths in all kinds of inferior and superior wombs ranging from the highest divine beings to the lowest grade of insects and worms, as also in the vegetable and mineral kingdoms.

The Karmas are broadly classified into three categories, the meritorious, the sinful and the mixed, partly meritorious and partly sinful. The meritorious Karmas result in births in heavenly worlds, sinful Karmas in births in hellish worlds and subhuman kingdoms, and the mixed ones in the human kingdom. After the exhaustion of the results of the Karmas which have been the cause of one body, the individual soul drops off that particular body only to assume again another according to the results of the unspent Karmas. This cycle of transmigration goes on endlessly as long as one does not

attain the knowledge of the Reality which alone is capable of breaking this vicious circular chain which binds man. The scriptures dealing with Karmas give us voluminous descriptions of the nature of Karmas, details of performance of those Karmas recommended by them and the different results that ensue from their performance. Another classification of Karmas divides them into prohibited Karmas, prescribed Karmas, obligatory ones and those of expiatory nature. A seeker who has taken to the spiritual path should completely avoid the prohibited Karmas and engage himself in the performance of those enjoined in the scriptures. This latter class will result in enjoyments in this world and in the heavenly worlds, if performed with desire for their fruits. On the other hand, if they are done without desire for their results, as is expected of the spiritual aspirants, they purify the mind of the performer and prepare him for the reception of the Saving Knowledge. At a particular stage, the seeker is advised to renounce these Karmas also, and concentrate his attention only on the obligatory ones, the performance of which, it is said, is productive of no result but the non-performance of which results in sin. As every action has necessarily to produce its effect, some are of the view that the obligatory Karmas also produce their results. Both the scripture-enjoined Karmas and the obligatory ones which are to be performed daily or occasionally, if done selflessly surrendering their fruits to the Almighty Lord, will help the spiritual progress of the aspirant. The last class of Karmas, viz., the expiatory ones done with the specific purpose of liquidating certain sins already committed, will bear fruit if done in the prescribed manner with a feeling of complete repentance, and if their repetition in future is avoided,

In the classification of Karmas by the scriptures into Sanchita, Agami and Prarabdha, it is not exactly the Karmas but the results of Karmas which come under the above three categories, although

the word 'Karmas' alone is used. Sanchita is the main storehouse of all the results of actions done in the innumerable past lives and to which is added the results of Karmas performed in the present and future births, which go by the name of Agami Karmas. When a Jiva is born it brings with it a certain portion of the results of Karmas taken from the main stock of Sanchita, for experience during this life. This is called Prarabdha Karmas-those results which have already begun to give their experience of pleasure and pain.

The importance of Karmas in the life of man needs no special mention, for no man can, as the Bhagavadgita says, even for a moment, remain without doing Karmas. This Karma which none can avoid, acts as the direct cause of misery through bondage, and as indirect cause of eternal happiness through Liberation. Karmas done ignorant of the law of nature, bind man to this earth. On the other hand, Karmas performed with right understanding help his liberation.

Due to primeval nescience, say the scriptures, a false mutual superimposition arises between the Real and the unreal, and their attributes. One of the several effects of the superimposition is the feeling, 'I am this body'. The aim of all scriptures and spiritual practice is the removal of this false, wrong superimposition by a process of de-superimposition through the knowledge 'I Brahman'. This knowledge is arrived at through what is called in the Vedantic texts the 'Neti, Neti- not this, not this' process-an intellectual process by which duly qualified aspirant possessing a subtle intellect purified to a high degree, eliminates every object appearing different from the ultimate Reality. The number of objects in the universe is legion. Therefore, it is practically impossible for the seeker to take the objects one by one and eliminate them as not-Atman. Any number of lives will be insufficient to exhaust all the objects in the universe by this method. Therefore, the scriptures have devised a method to

simplify the Sadhana of the seeker. They have reduced all the objects into their fundamental causes, viz., the five elements in their subtle forms, the ether, air, fire, water and earth. When these five basic great elements are eliminated, the whole world which is only an effect of these elements gets itself eliminated. Having eliminated the world outside, the seeker finally comes to himself. He finds that so far he has been considering his body as his Self. Now he has to eliminate this body also as not-Atman. The question naturally arises as to what is this Atman, if it is not this body?

In order to answer this seemingly pertinent question of the seeker, the preceptor instructs him to make a thorough analysis of this body. This analysis while being a scientific one, differs from the ordinary physical and chemical analysis of substances done in the laboratories. Lavoratory analysis of this body cannot help one to go beyond its material constituents such as chyle, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and the sperm or ovum as the case may be. Even if we further analyse them into their atoms and again into protons, electrons, neutrons and their constituents, still we will be only in the lower plane. The sages of yore who have gone very much deeper into the subject, not with the help of any instruments of the physical, chemical or biological laboratory, but through their highly purified and concentrated mind and intellect, have found out that beyond the physical body constituted of the above-said seven items, there are two other bodies, the subtle and the causal. Through a further analysis of the subtle body, they have been able to split it further into its component parts, known as sheaths or Kosas. They are the vital force-sheath, the mind-sheath and the intellect-sheath. The gross body is given the name of physical sheath, and the causal body the bliss-sheath, thus making the aggregate number of five sheaths. It is these sheaths that veil, as it were, the innermost Atman.

To remove the idea I am this body', one has therefore to eliminate these above-said five sheaths constituting the body. The Taittiriya Upanishad, parts II & III, deal with this aspect of Sadhana. Part II reveals Brahman as the indwelling Self by eliminating the five sheaths. In winter one may wear a banian, a shirt, a jersey, a waistcoat and an overcoat to cover one's body. One has to remove all the five layers to reach the body. This is a very crude illustration. While the object covered and those which cover them are both gross in the illustration, in the case of the Atman all the sheaths excepting the physical one which are supposed to cover It, are subtle, and the Atman which remains ever revealed is transcendental. It transcends the gross, subtle and causal. The vital force, mind, intellect and bliss sheaths are more and more expansive and pervasive, so much so, scriptures say that the outer sheath is contained in the inner ones. No illustration can reveal the exact relation of the Atman with the sheaths.

In the third part of the Taittiriya Upanishad, Bhrigu approaches his father Varuna with the prayer to teach him about Brahman. To him Varuna replies: 'Food, vital force, eye, ear, mind and speech are the aids to the knowledge of Brahman. Crave to know It through concentration (Tapas). Concentration is Brahman.'

Here, concentration is repeatedly inculcated in order to emphasise the fact of it being the best discipline for the spiritual seeker till his desire to know becomes quietened. Bhrigu starts concentration first on food which here stands for the physical body, with Visva as its innermost essence in the individual aspect co-existent with Virat in the universal counterpart. As a result of concentration he identifies himself with the object of meditation and becomes one with it. But he does not get satisfaction. He, therefore, through the advice of his father and preceptor, Varuna, subjects himself to further concentration, transcends the physical body and meditates on the vital force-Prana. He pushes on his enquiry and arrives at Taijasa,

the essence of his subtle body possessing vital energy, and Hiranyagarbha, the cosmic Prana. This also does not satisfy him fully. Transcending the vital force he comes to the mind with Hiranyagarbha in his aspect as the cosmic mind. Becoming pure and pure through concentration, and still failing to reach Brahman, he finds his way to the next subtler aspect of his personality which is the intellect. He concentrates on Taijasa along with Hiranyagarbha in his knowledge-aspect in the universal counterpart. Concentration on this Knowledge-Atman (Vijnana Atman) is a very subtle process, subtler than concentration on the preceding three stages. For, here the intellect (Buddhi) has to outgrow its individual aspect and becoming universal, has to concentrate not on anything outside it but only on its own essence.

Bhrigu having meditated on the intellect-self, transcends it and steps into the bliss-self. The story ends here. The Upanishad states that this knowledge realised by Bhrigu and imparted by Varuna, starts from the food-self and terminates in the supreme Bliss established in the cavity of the heart (Hridaya). The heart here means not the fleshy organ inside the body, but the innermost essence of all essences, the Atman that is all-pervasive, eternal, the Reality Absolute present in every object, sentient and non-sentient, in every concept and thought and in every modification of the mind. That is the real 'I', and not the body or any constituent part thereof.

Beyond the intellect-Atman is the bliss-Atman, the causal body, represented by the Prajna of the deep sleep state in the individual and Isvara, the Unmanifested in the universal aspect. When one reaches this stage in the rise of one's consciousness, the intellect both in the individual and universal aspects can no more retain their individuality and universality. Therefore, it is difficult of any definition or description. The Yoga-Sutras of Sage Patanjali represent this as the Sa-ananda Samadhi which transcends the

Savitarka, Nirvitarka, Savichara and Nirvichara Samadhis corresponding to the consciousness in the mind and intellect sheaths. Beyond the Sa-ananda, the Yoga-Sutras give us the Sa-asmita Samadhi. These come under the Samprajnata or the objectively conscious conditions in various stages of subtlety of being, on the way to the Asamprajnata, the non-objective state, the Nirbija state which defies all description. The Goal, which is beyond all these is the Reality-Absolute free of all possible relationship-the Nishpratiyogika Brahman, as it is known in some Vedantic texts. Some make mention of six progressive stages in the rise of consciousness from the intellect-sheath before one attains Kaivalya, the supreme Alone-ness. These are known by the names of Drisyanuviddha, Sabdanuviddha, Nirvikalpa, Nissankalpa, Nirvrittika and Nirvasana Samadhis. One has to pass through and transcend all the six stages to get established in the Absolute.

The last stage is the establishment in the pure Awareness through the knowledge "I am Brahman" and the final destruction of the nescience. This is a process in which much of the effort of the early periods of the Sadhana is said to be absent. When once the Sadhaka has disentangled himself from identification with his body, he can be said to have passed over the most difficult part of the spiritual practice. He is now convinced beyond doubt of the ephemeral nature of the universe and his own body separated from Brahman. He is equally convinced of the reality of the Absolute Truth which cannot exclude anything in the universe inclusive of his own body. That which he eliminated in the early period of his practice as not-Atman, is no longer the not-Atman, for everything has become Brahman. The idea I am the body' having been replaced first by 'I am the Atman', is again substituted by I am the all-everything here is verily Brahman'. Does the world exist for him? The answer is 'Yes' and 'No'. Yes, because it exists as Brahman, it is non-different

from Brahman. No, because there is really nothing other than Brahman.

INTELLECT AND THE WITNESS

The essential nature of man is pure, unmoded Consciousness which is the same as the Essence of the whole universe. This supreme truth, the Atman-Brahman identity as it is known in Vedantic parlance, is the bestower of eternal happiness and peace through the eradication of our basic ignorance about the real nature of our own Self and of this world we live in. To get this knowledge the scriptures prescribe inter discrimination of the never-changing Atman, the Witness of the intellect, from the ever-changing intellect and its modifications. A few of the questions that may arise in the mind of a sincere and qualified seeker, in the process of discrimination, are taken up and replied through reasoning supported by scriptures:

i. If the Atman is non-dual and unchanging why do we perceive many Jivas?

ii. The Atman in contact with the ignorant Jiva in the body will partake of the limited and non-sentient nature and how can such an Atman be identified with the infinite Brahman?

iii. What is the proof to show that the intellect is ever-changing and the Atman is changeless?

The next seven verses (Nos. 7 to 13) of the book deal with these points:

जलेर्दकृता बहुतेव रवे-
रर्रिकार्र्दकृता नस्रोऽर्प यथा ।
मर्तेर्दकृता तु तथा बहुता,
तव बुर्द्धदृशोऽर्वकृतस्य सङ्गा ॥७

Jala-bheda-krita bahuteva raver-
ghatikadi-krita nabhasopi yatha,
Mati-bheda-krita tu tatha bahuta
tava buddhi-driso-avikritasya sada.

र्‌दनकृत्प्रया् सदृशेन सर्दा,
जनर्चत्तरतं सकलं स्वर्चता ।
वर्र्‌दतं व्ताऽर्वकृतेन सर्दा,
यत एवमतोऽर्सत एव सर्दा

Dinakrit-prabhaya sadrisena sada
jana-chitta-ratam sakalam svachita,
Viditam bhavata-avikritena sada
yata evam-ato-asita eva sada.

उपरागमपेक्ष्य मर्तर्वरषयै
र्वषयावधृरूतं कुरुते तु यतः
तत एव मतेर्वरर्‌दतार्वर्‌दता
र्वषयास्तु ततः पररणामवती ॥ ९

Uparagam-apekshya mater-vishayair-
vishayavadhritim kurute tu yatah,
Tata eva mater-viditavidita
vishayastu tatah parinamavati.

मर्तवृत्तय आत्मर्चतार्वर्‌दताः,
सततं र्ह यतोऽर्वकृतस्तु ततः

यर्द्द चात्मर्चर्तः पररणामवती,

मतयोर्वर्द्दतार्वर्द्दताः स्युरुरमाः।।। १०

Mati-vrittaya atmachita viditah
satatam hi yato-avikritastu tatah,
Yadi chatmachitih parinamavati
matayo-viditaviditah syur-imah.

चररतं तु र्धयः सकलं सततं,

वर्द्दतं व्ता पररशुद्धर्चता ।

मर्त्तेर्दगुणो नर्ह तेर्स्त ततो,

यत एव मतोऽसदृशस्तु र्धयां ॥ ११

Charitam tu dhiyah sakalam satatam
viditam bhavata parisuddha-chita,
Mati-bheda-guno nahi testi tato
yata evam-ato-asadrisastu dhiya.

वर्द्दतत्त्वमर्वप्रर्तपन्नतया,

मर्तषु प्रगतं र्वषयेषु यथा ।

यत एवमतः परसंर्वर्द्दता,

वर्द्दतत्त्वत एव यथा र्वषयाः ॥ १२

Viditatvam-avipratipannataya
matishu pragatam vishayestu yatha,
Yata evam-atah parasamvidita
viditatvata eva yatha vishayah.

परसंर्वर्र्दताः सततं र्ह यतो,

न र्वरुद्धुः स्वममी र्वषयास्तु ुततः ।

मतयोर्प तथा परसंर्वर्र्दता,

न र्वरुद्धुः स्वममूर्वरषयास्तु यथा ॥ १३

Para-samviditah satatam hi yato

na viduh svam-ami vishayastu tatah,

Matayopi tatha para-samvidita

na viduh svamamur-vishayastu yatha.

Just as the single sun in the sky is seen as though many due to its reflection in the several pots of water, and just as the one homogeneous ether is considered as split up into many such as pot-ether, house-ether, etc., due to the limitation caused by a pot, a house, etc., even so the non-dual, ever-changeless Witness of the intellect appears as many Jivas, objects and concepts because of the modification of the intellect.

According to the Pratibimba Vada, the Jivas are the reflections of the single Consciousness on the individual intellects. This is the view of a section of the Vedantins. Everything here, other than the Atman, is inert and insentient, and can therefore possess no sentience. But in phenomenal dealings, the Jivas appear as though sentient which fact cannot be easily set aside. Hence, in the empirical level, they are forced to accept that the one Consciousness appears to be reflected as many Jivas.

The illustration of the pot-ether belongs to those who follow the Avaccheda Vada. They aver that though the sky ether is all-pervasive and does not admit of any break or breach in it, yet in our conventional dealings we speak of pot-ether and house-ether, i.e., the ether limited by a pot and a house. A little thinking will make

it clear that space or ether exists inside and outside these objects and also in the walls of the pot and the house, in every atom and its subdivisions, so much so, there is no space where ether can be said to be absent. The pot and the house themselves are the very ether and the conventional differentiation in the ether is nothing but illusion. Even so, say the Avaccheda Vadins, the one homogeneous Witness Consciousness is always infinite and unlimited and the Jivas are only limited appearances of that unlimited Consciousness, projected through nescience.

Just as the unreality of the reflected images of the sun and the limited pot-ether and house-ether is realised only when one comes to know about the real sun and the unlimited ether, even so the unreal and phenomenal nature of the Jivas can be fully known only when one realises the reality of the Atman-Brahman. Till then the Jivas will not shed their apparent reality.

This has the support of the Srutis and Smritis: "Brahman is verily one and non-dual"- says the Chhandogya Upanishad (VI-2-i). "The one Supreme God is seated in all beings, objects and elements" - declares the Svetasvatara Upanishad (VI-11). The Brahma Bindu Upanishad (Mantra 12) proclaims: "The Atman is verily one and appears as many and different in different beings, even as the one moon is seen as many in its reflections on water". "O Arjuna, know Me as the Knower of the field in all the fields (beings and objects)" - Bhagavad-Gita (XIII-2).

The second question is answered through another illustration: The rays of the sun illumine every nook and corner of this world. But the sun remains unaffected either favourably or unfavourably by the world and its objects. Even so, the innermost Atman who is self-luminous and devoid of modifications, shines always, and by the Atman are illumined the intellects of all beings along with the presence and absence of all the modifications of the intellects. For this reason, the Atman verily is ever free of bondage and limitation.

There is no proof for the existence of an object which does not come within the purview of the intellect. The intellect is changing with every object or concept cognised by it. As such, this ever- changing intellect cannot know itself. The changing intellect can be known only through the non-changing Atman, the pure Consciousness. Consciousness is the very nature of the Atman. In the analogy of the rays of the sun, we see that none of the objects of this world illumined by the rays, is able to cause even the slightest modification in the sun or in its rays. Neither the dirt of the world soils the sun, nor all the perfumes put together make the sun sweet-smelling. Even so, the pleasures and pains of the ignorant man which are the modifications of the mind, do not even touch the Atman which remains innermost to the five sheaths and also transcends them.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the illuminant cannot be illumined by that which is illumined. A lamp can illumine an object near it, but the object cannot illumine the lamp. The eye which sees objects cannot be seen by the objects. Similarly, the mind as well as the objects cognised by it, are illumined by the Consciousness. Hence, the Sat-Chit-Ananda nature of the Atman cannot in the least be affected by the mind and its modifications. The pleasure and pain experienced in dream do not affect the man when he comes back to the waking state. Even so, the happiness and miseries in the present waking state do not affect the pure Consciousness -- the Turiya or the real waking state. Therefore, there is no objection in identifying the Atman with Brahman of the nature of Sat-Chit-Ananda.

The third question is now taken and answered: When the intellect comes in contact with objects it assumes their forms. With the intellect assuming the forms of objects, it is said to know them and when it does not assume their forms, it is said that it does not cognise them. Hence the intellect is ever-changing.

In the cognition of an object, what happens is this. The intellect first contacts the object through the sense-organs, and in so doing, the intellect assumes the very form of that object. It is something like molten metal poured into a crucible taking the form of the crucible. This destroys the ignorance of the object which existed before the contact. The intellect being inert cannot illumine the object. The Consciousness of the Atman now illumines the intellect in the form of the object, and one says: "I know the object". In the absence of the contact between the intellect and the object, the latter remains unknown which fact is also illumined by the Consciousness of the Atman, and one says: "I do not know the object". Therefore, it is the intellect that gets modified in every cognition.

All modifications of the intellect are always illumined by the self-effulgent Consciousness. If consciousness also were to undergo change like the intellect, the modifications of the intellect would, like the external objects, sometimes be known and sometimes unknown. But this goes counter to our daily experience. Therefore, it is the conclusion of the wise that the Consciousness of the Atman is always changeless.

To explain further, the fact is that during cognition of objects, it is the intellect that changes and assumes the forms of the objects, and not the Atman whose consciousness illumines these changes. The modification of the intellect in the form of 'I know the pot', as also the modification in the form of 'I do not know the pot', are both illumined by the Consciousness, which remains without any modification as the Witness of all the modifications of the intellect. This is the accepted view of Vedanta. When the intellect, through the five sense-organs of hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling, comes in contact with their respective objects such as sound, touch, form, taste and smell, it assumes the forms of these objects, and the ever-effulgent Consciousness illumines them.

Then one says that one hears the sound and one knows that one hears. Similarly, one sees and knows that one sees, and so on in the other cases also. When one does not hear a sound or see a colour, one knows that he does not hear and does not see. This shows that though the modifications of the intellect have changed, the illumination of those modifications by the Consciousness ever continues without cessation. This proves the fact that all changes are only in the intellect and not in the Atman. "The Atman is without sound, without touch, without form and without change" - says the Kathopanishad (I-3-xv).

The Yoga-Sutras of Sage Patanjali make a threadbare analysis of the modus operandi of mental perception in order to enable the Yogic student to concentrate and rise from the lower planes of consciousness to the higher planes and reach the highest level signified by the term Dharma Megha Samadhi. Sutras 17 to 20 of Chapter IV-Kaivalya Pada, throw much light on this point under consideration. These Sutras state that in consequence of the mind being coloured or not coloured by an object, the object is known or not known, respectively. The modifications or colourations of the mind are always known by its Lord, the Purusha, on account of His changelessness. This mind is not self-illuminative, for it is perceptible like other inert objects. It is impossible for the mind to be both ways, i.e., to become the perceiver and the perceived at the same time.

The treatise Panchadasi of Sri Swami Vidyaranya illustrates this point with the analogy of a big flood-light kept in a drama theatre. The light which is switched on well in advance of the performance, illuminates the empty hall before the arrival of the spectators and the actors. When the drama is in full swing and the hall and the stage are filled with people, then also the light illumines them. Whether a particular scene in the drama depicts a tragedy or a comedy, the light illumines it without partiality. After the close of

the drama, when the hall becomes empty, that state also is illumined by the light. And all this time, the light remains unaffected either by the presence or absence of the men, or by the tragic or comic nature of the scene enacted. Similar is the case of the Consciousness which remains unaffected by all the innumerable modifications of the intellect, their presence in the waking and dreaming states and absence in the deep sleep state. The Consciousness, like the flood-light in the illustration, remains unchanged amidst the changing intellect and its modifications.

The whole biography of the intellect is always made known by the Atman, the pure, uncontaminated, objectless Consciousness. The modifications of the intellect are therefore never in the pure Atman. Hence the Atman is quite distinct from the intellect and its changes.

A witness of a scene of action is distinct from the parties engaged in the action and its results, and is never affected favourably or unfavourably by the good or bad involved in the action and its fruits. Similarly, the Witness of the intellect and its activities, is separate from them and always remains untouched by them.

Some may argue: 'It is the intellect which assumes the forms of the empirical knower and the known. What is the necessity of bringing in an unknown and unknowable Atman which is said to illumine both the knower and the known? No one sees such an Atman beyond and distinct from the intellect'. To this, it is replied: We see the attribute of 'being perceived' in objects like a pot and a cloth. This attribute of being perceived is seen present in the intellect and its modifications, for they become objects to the subject 'I'. It is well-known that objects which are illumined by another entity and not by themselves, are inert and different from their illuminant. The intellect and its modifications are similarly illumined by another, and therefore, they are also inert like objects such as a pot. Thus we come to the necessity of another entity to illumine the intellect and its modifications, which is distinct from them. And that is the

consciousness of the Atman. Hence, the scriptures say that the self-effulgent, eternal Consciousness can never be avoided for knowing the presence and absence of not only the objects outside but also of the intellect and its modifications inside.

Can one and the same modification of the intellect (Buddhi Vritti) be the 'knower' and the 'known'? It cannot, says Yoga Sutra No. 20 referred to above. Then, can one Vritti cognise another Vritti? If this is postulated, says the next Sutra (No. 21), we have to assume cognition of cognitions and confusion of memories would arise. Hence, the only alternative is to leave off all reasonings of the limited human intellect and safely take refuge in the wise sayings of the scriptures. Even the best intellect cannot refute the conclusion of the scriptures that the intellect cannot go beyond itself and grasp what transcends it. Consciousness is beyond the intellect, extremely subtle, being subtler than the subtlest. The individual intellect cannot know the Consciousness, in the state of ignorance. Yoga-Sutra No. 22 gives us the conclusion that the Atman hidden in the cave of the heart, beneath the five sheaths, will be revealed only by diving in Samadhi into our Consciousness, until the intellect in its subtlest form is transcended. The next Sutra (No. 23) explains the most mysterious working of the mind. The mind being coloured by the 'seer' and the 'seen' understands everything. The mind is under double influence. It is affected by the objects outside and it assumes their forms. It is also influenced by the Consciousness and is rendered capable of cognitions, and hence the mind gets the power of knowing everything.

Then why not we posit the attributes of being an 'Illuminant' and also the 'illumined', for the intellect? This is unreasonable and cannot be done, is the view of the scriptures. Objects cannot know themselves. They always remain as the 'known' only and never as the 'Knower'. Even so, the Buddhi Vrittis also are illumined by the Consciousness which is separate from them, and hence neither

those Vrittis nor the Buddhi can become the 'Knower'. They always come under the 'known'.

THE EGO AND THE ATMAN

The same one Antahkarana (internal organ as distinguished from the external organs of sense and action) is sometimes called Chitta, Manas, Buddhi and Ahamkara (the unconscious and the subconscious, mind, intellect and ego respectively) according to the nature of the functions involved. Having transcended the Buddhi or the intellect, one has to come face to face with one's ego or the 'T', the most subtle phase of the internal organ. This is the innermost veil that covers the Reality as it were. It is the last barrier that obstructs the realisation of one's own real nature. Vedanta says that the Witness of the Buddhi and of its Vrittis is the Atman which is the same as the attributeless Brahman. Then what is the position of the ego or 'I'. Is it the same as the Atman, or is it an attribute of the Atman?

Sri Totakacharya discusses this point in the next seven verses. He says:

वषयाकृर्तसंस्थर्तरेकर्व,धा

मनसस्तु सर्दा व्यवहारर्वधौ ।

अहर्मत्यर्प तर्ि्षयात्व,ऽपरा

मर्तवृर्त्तरवज्वर्लतात्मर्चता ॥१४

Vishayakriti-samsthitir-ekavidha

manasastu sada vyavaharavidhau,

Aham-ityapi tadvishaya-tvapara

mativrittir-avaj litatmachita.

In all phenomenal dealings in this world, the Antahkarana assumes two forms, one being the form of the object perceived, and the other the form of the subject, the ego or I, the knower or perceiver of the object.

Both these forms of the mind are illumined by the Consciousness of the Atman which is unchanging, non-dual and attributeless. The 'I' is a modification of the Antahkarana and hence it is inert like the Antahkarana. Then how does this inert 'I' make the assertion: 'I know this'? The reply is:

पुरुषस्य तु धमरवरुद्भवर्त,
स्वरसेन मतेः स्वगुणोर्प यतः

अत आत्मगुणं प्रर्तयन्र्त जना,

मर्तवृर्त्तर्ममामहर्मत्यबुधाः ।। १५

Purushasya tu dharmavad-udbhavati

svarasena mateh svagunopi yatah,

Ata atmagunam pratiyanti jana

mativrittim-imam-aham-ityabudhah. (15)

Though the Vrittis such as I am a doer', 'this is my duty', etc., naturally pertain to the mind alone, this characteristic of the mind is superimposed on the pure Purusha or Consciousness through nescience. Therefore, such Vrittis appear as though they are the attributes of the sentient Consciousness. The ignorant take it for granted that these Vrittis are really in the Consciousness, but the wise, without committing this mistake, relegate them to the mind.

What exactly is this superimposition? Acharya Sankara in his introduction to the commentary on the Brahma-Sutras says that it is the awareness, similar in nature to memory, that arises on a different or foreign basis as a result of some past experience. The

Acharya adds that with regard to this word there are different definitions, but from every point of view, there is no difference as regards the appearance of one thing as something else. And in accordance with this, the appearances of silver in nacre, a snake in a rope, etc., are illustrations of superimposition. Further, raising a prima facie view that such superimposition can appear only in the empirical world of objects and cannot happen in the non-dual Atman which is beyond the reach of senses, the Acharya refutes it by saying that the Self is not absolutely beyond apprehension, because It is apprehended in the conception of 'I'. He also denies the existence of a rule that in the case of all superimpositions, both the substratum and the appearance should necessarily be perceivable to the senses. He cites the instances of boys superimposing ideas of concavity and dirt in the sky which is not an object of sense-perception. Superimposition can be of several kinds depending on the degree of delusion. When one's wife and children are hale and happy, one superimposes their happiness on oneself and feels 'I myself am happy'. When they suffer, one says 'I am myself suffering'. In these cases, one superimposes the characteristics of the other persons on oneself. One superimposes the characteristics of one's own body on oneself when one says 'I am fat', 'I am fair', etc. Similarly, it is the superimposition of the attributes of the senses on oneself when one says, 'I am blind', 'I am lame', etc. When one says, 'I desire', 'I feel this doubt', etc., it is a case of superimposition of the characteristics of the internal organ on oneself. In exactly similar manner, one superimposes the internal organ possessed of the idea of the ego, on the Self, the Witness, and the Self which is opposed to the non-self and which is the silent Witness of everything, on the internal organ. Thus occurs the superimposition that has neither beginning nor end, but flows on eternally. It is due to this that we have the appearance of the manifested world and its apprehension that conjures up doership and enjoyership. This is perceived by everyone alike-says

Acharya Sankara. It is in order to eradicate this evil, that a process of de-superimposition is taught by the scriptures and sages to sincere and qualified aspirants who have a burning aspiration to get out of this mess of Samsara, most miserable and mysterious and yet illusory, deluding and unreal.

If the ego, a modification of the internal organ, is only a superimposition on the Atman, why do we take note of it and suffer as a result of it? Why not we overlook it, and be freed from all sufferings?

यर्द् सा न वे्ज्जनमोहकरी,

व्यवहारर्ममं न जनोऽनुवे्त् ।

र्वफलि तर्दा र्वषयानुव्ो,

ज्ञगुणो नर्ह सेर्त यर्दा र्वर्द्दता॥ ॥ १६

Yadi sa na bhavet-jana-mohakari

vyavaharam-imam na janonubhavet,

Viphalas-cha tada vishayanubhavo

jnaguno nahi seti yada vidita.

Sri Totakacharya says that it cannot be overlooked so long as we are in this empirical world. But for this ego, the Aham-Vritti of the internal organ, which deludes all beings, none of the experiences of this empirical world could have been made possible. For, we see that to one who through discrimination and through the process of de-superimposition comes to know and realise that the ego or the 'I' is not the nature or characteristic of the Atman, the experience of sense-objects becomes fruitless.

As long as we are in this world of objects doing the so-called normal duties, we have the necessity of the ego for all our dealings. All beings from the great Brahma, the creator, down to the most

insignificant creatures such as insects and worms, have this feeling of 'T' in them. Brahma, the first embodied being, says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (I-4-i), just after his coming out of the great Lotus, and before starting the creation of this world, cast his look in all directions, and beholding nothing else but himself, first declared: 'I am Viraj'. Hence, even now when any one among men is enquired who he is, he first describes himself as 'I', and thereafter, on further enquiry, makes mention of his name given to him by his parents after the birth of his present body. That even an ant and other creatures have this feeling of 'I' is seen from their desire for food, their moving away from immanent danger and similar other activities. No hair-splitting arguments are necessary to prove that it is the identification of oneself with one's own body that becomes the cause of all thought, speech and action in this world. In the absence of the feeling of 'I', why should one act at all? Some of the realised sages are found actionless, speechless and thoughtless, their behaviour running quite counter to the conduct of those who identify themselves with the feeling of 'I'. The actions and speeches of some others among the realised souls, which are noticed by others in the ignorant state, are to those realised souls equivalent to non-action and silence. Having got themselves freed from the individual 'I' feeling, they see the whole universe as their own Self, and themselves as the universe. If a person knows the Self as 'I am this Supreme Self', then he will not imbibe the afflictions of the body for the sake of any object or for the sake of any person-declares the same Upanishad (Br. Up. IV-4-xii). The idea is that such a person who has no 'I' feeling, will not do actions like the ignorant having the egoistic feeling. The ego, a modification of the Antahkarana which is ever-changing, is therefore a superimposition on the eternal changeless Atman, resulting in the phenomenal day-to-day transactions of this world.

उपलभ्यरि्रर्दनै्व वे्-

न्मनसो यर्द् संस्थर्तरेकर्वधा ।

पुरुषस्य र्चर्ति न र्वर्ियते,

मर्तवृर्त्तमपेक्ष्य र्घर्दर्नर्म् ॥ १७

Upalabhya-ghatadi-nibhaiva bhaven

manaso yadi samsthitir-ekavidha,

Purushasya chitis-cha na vikriyate

mati-vrittim-apekshya ghatadi-nibham.

अवगंत्रवगम्यर्चर्दात्मर्थयो-

रहर्मर्त्यर्मानर्वहीनतया ।

स्र्थतयोर्र्मानपुरःसरकं,

व्यवहारपथं न जनोऽवतरेत्॥ ।। १८

Avagantravagamya chidatma-dhiyor-

aham-ityabhimana-vihinataya,

Sthitayor-abhimana-purahsarakam

vyavaharapatham na janovataret.

As a further explanation, a question is raised as to what would happen if the existing state of affairs were to be reversed. Suppose the Antahkarana loses its changing nature and becomes non-changing; and the Consciousness of the Atman assumes the attribute of changeability. The result of these supposed reversal of their attributes would result in the Antahkarana becoming inert like a pot and other objects, and the Consciousness also becoming insentient like inert objects. This would mean the absence of a sentient subject, the knower, and also the absence of experience of objects.

The Consciousness is the knower (subject) and the modifications of the Antahkarana are the knowables (objects). If the ego or 'I' were not to attach itself to these two, their condition would change and they would no more be of any utility in the empirical world. People will be unable to transact their day-to-day business. All empirical dealings would come to a stop.

The mutual superimposition of the Consciousness and the ego is therefore the main cause of all empirical dealings. Sri Sankaracharya explains this fact in the introductory portion of his Brahma-Sutra Bhashya referred to above. He shows how as far as empirical transactions are concerned, the use of the means of perception by all men including the wise, is similar to that by the lower animals, it being a result of mutual superimposition: The knowledge of the Reality-Absolute has no relevance in the empirical dealings. As a matter of fact, the Supreme Atman is opposed to all such dealings, inasmuch as it is beyond hunger and thirst, free from all differentiation due to one's social position and order in life (Varna and Asrama) and not subject to birth and death. For any empirical transaction a vague idea about the individual Jiva is quite enough and no knowledge of the Atman, the Reality-Absolute is needed. On the other hand, when one knows about It, one loses all erroneous self-identification, and selfish actions become impossible for him.

Now, how do empirical dealings take place? This is explained with reference to the process of perception.

अहमीक्ष इर्त प्रथमं ह र्धया,

सुर्वर्चन्त्य ततो र्वषर्या्मिुम् ◌्।

नयनं प्रर्हणोर्त तथान्यर्दर्प,

श्रवणार्र्दर्वयत्प्रमिुस्य गुणे ॥ १९

Aham-iksha iti prathamam hi dhiya
suvichintya tato vishayabhimukham,
Nayanam prahinoti tathanyad-api
sravanadi-viyat-pramukhasya guno.

अपहायनकरि्दहंकरणं,
व्यवहारमुपैर्त कर्दार्चर्दर्प ।
उपपन्नतराह्र मतेस्तु ततो,
व्यवहारपथं प्रर्त कारणता॥ २०

Apahaya na kaschid-ahamkaranam
vyavaharam-upaiti kadachid-api,
Upapannatarahi matestu tato
vyavaharapatham prati karanata.

When an object is in front of us, in the intellect arises the Vritti 'I see' at the outset. The intellect thinks well about this first Vritti. Thereafter, i.e., after the rise of this Vritti and consideration thereof, the eyes are engaged in the form, colour, etc. of the object. This is the process which happens in the organ of sight, in the case of perception through the eyes. Similar is the case with the cognition of sound, taste, smell and touch through the other four organs.

One who has through spiritual practice transcended the ego or 'T', will be unable to perceive distractions among the objects, because the first Vritti such as 'I see', 'I hear', etc., does not arise due to the absence of the 'I'. This proves our conclusion that all empirical dealings are rooted in the ego and they are rendered impossible in its absence. When there is no ego, even those minimum activities

of man for the maintenance of his body are rendered impossible of performance.

The body is attached to the ego or the 'T'. This 'I' is a mysterious combination of Consciousness and matter-the sentient and the non-sentient manifestations of the one Reality. In the evolution of the non-dual, unmoded Consciousness free of all relations, into this phenomenal universe of endless differences, the birth of this 'I' is the first stage. Scriptures assign to this 'T' the part of a connecting link between the pure, sentient Consciousness and the impure, inert matter, itself remaining both sentient and non-sentient. In the dissolution of the ego, the sentient part becomes one with the pure Consciousness and the non-sentient part is transcended. The presence of the ego is therefore essential for empirical dealings of man starting from the most elementary activities such as eating and drinking, up to the final liberation from this phenomenal world and the Sadhana therefor. The pure Consciousness, as it is, cannot have any kind of relation with this universe, and hence, it is not in need of liberation, being eternally free. The other side of the ego, viz., the insentient matter cannot be liberated, as it is inert and does not need liberation. It is this mysterious ego 'T' which is said to be in bondage aspires and practises Sadhana for liberation.

"While the pure Consciousness does not rise and set, being the eternally self-effulgent and unchanging, this 'T' has characteristic of rising and setting. It rises in the waking and dreaming states and sets in the deep sleep, swoon and Samadhi states. While the whole of the not-Atman, the inert portion of this universe including our body, cannot say 'I', 'I', this ego always asserts as 'I'. Therefore, it is said that the 'I' is neither pure Consciousness, nor is it the inert, impure body. In between these two, rises this 'I' in the size of the body. This is what is called by the names of the intellect, mind, subtle body, Ahamkara, Chit-jada-granthi, Samsara, bondage, etc. This 'I' comes into being attaching

itself to the body, exists as long as the body exists, its strength increases along with the growth of the body, it leaves off one body and attaches itself to another. If any one institutes an enquiry into its nature, it disappears completely. It is like a ghost devoid of form."-says Sri Ramana Maharshi.

THE NATURE AND LOCUS OF THE EGO

In the course of the long and tedious march towards the spiritual Goal the seeker has, at sometime or other, to come face to face with the ego or the 'I' in him. The question 'who is this ego?' or 'who am I?' naturally arises. Through a careful and subtle discrimination, and reasoning supported by the scriptures, he will finally arrive at the astounding discovery that the 'I', as it is, is after all an illusory imagination superimposed on the only Reality, the pure Consciousness. But till one reaches that firm conviction and realisation, one cannot avoid this 'I' however much he may try. This ego may be said to be constituted of Consciousness on one side and the inert aggregate of all the materials constituting the body on the other side. For this reason, the scriptures exhort the seekers to enter into the Sadhana of enquiring 'Who am I?'. The author discusses within the span of the next thirteen verses the nature and locus of the ego, and through a process of plain and easy reasoning shows that the ego has no locus in the pure Consciousness nor has the former any of the characteristics of the latter.

चैतशक्तिर्गुणः किमहङ्करणं

किमु बुद्धिर्गुणोऽथ वेरुभयोः

इति चिन्त्यमर्दं मनस्यनलसै

रूपपत्तिरात्महितं यतिः ॥ २॥

Chitisakti-gunah kim-ahamkaranam

kimu buddhigunotha bhaved-ubhayoh,

Iti chintyam-idam manasanalasair-

upapattibhir-atma-hitam yatibhih.

उपलभ्यमहंकरणं न वे्त्,ि

पुरुषस्य गुणो यर्द् तर्हर वे्त् ि।

गुर्णरूपमथावयवं गुर्णनो,

न र्वहाय गुणः पृथगर्स्त यतः॥ २२

Upalabhyam-ahamkaranam na bhavet

purushasya guno yadi tarhi bhavet,

Gunirupam-athavayavam gunino

na vihaya gunah prithag-asti yatah.

He starts with the questions: Is the feeling of 'I' an attribute of the Atman? Or, is it an attribute of the intellect? Or is it an attribute of both the Atman and the intellect? These are the questions to be deeply reflected over in the mind by sincere, persevering and painstaking aspirants.

If the ego were an attribute of the Atman, it could not have become an object for the Consciousness, for the attribute of an object never stands separated from the object or its parts.

We can never separate the colour of a cloth from the cloth. Similarly, the threads which go to form the cloth and which may be said to be a 'part' of the cloth, the 'whole', cannot stand separated from the cloth without destroying the cloth. When the cloth is absent, its colour and its parts are non-existent. Any number of illustrations can be cited to prove the proposition that an attribute of an object cannot brook separation from the object. We find that the ego or 'I' stands distinguished from the Atman and that the former is illumined by the consciousness of the latter. If the ego

were an attribute of the Atman, this could not happen. Therefore, one has to come to the conclusion that the ego is not an attribute of the Atman, the pure Witness free of all attributes.

न गुणो गुर्णनर्स्थतवान् ुगर्णना,
र्वषयीर्यिते न च तस्य गुणैः ।
नर्ह र्देशकृता न च वस्तुकृता,
गुर्णनोर्स्त गुणर्स्य्र्दा तु ुयतः ॥ २३

Na guno gunini sthitavan gunina
vishayikriyate na cha tasya gunaih,
Nahi desakrita na cha vastukrita
guninosti gunasya bhida tu yatah.

न परस्परमर्ननगुणोऽर्ननगतो,
र्वषयत्वमुपैर्त कर्दार्चर्दर्प ।
न र्ह वर्ि्रर्प स्वगुणं स्वगतं,
र्वषयी कुरुते स्वगुणेन रुव ॥ २४

Na parasparam-agnigunognigato
vishayatvam-upaiti kadachid-api,
Na hi vahnir-api svagunam svagatam
vishayi kurute svagunena bhuvi.

What is it that illumines the attribute of an object? Is the attribute illumined by itself or is it illumined by another attribute of the object, or does the object illumine its attribute? Neither space nor other objects can create any distinction between an object and its attribute, and hence, the attribute that inheres in an object cannot be known either through that object or through another attribute.

Both these are not illuminants. That the attribute cannot be known by itself, goes without saying, as it is not self-effulgent.

The illustrations of fire and its attributes would further clarify this point. In this empirical world, the qualities inherent in fire, namely, heat and light, and the fire are never seen to possess the relationship of the illuminant and the illumined. For, the fire itself does not illumine its own inherent attributes, nor do the attributes illumine themselves. Heat cannot burn itself and the light cannot illumine itself, nor do they illumine each other. All the three are inert and as such cannot either illumine themselves or others. They cannot stand separated from each other. The attributes have no existence without the object, and vice versa, the object will cease to exist in the absence of the attributes. The general rule is, therefore, enunciated that the attribute of an object and the object cannot possess the relationship of the illumined and the illuminant. As a corollary, it follows that any two entities standing in the relation of the illuminant and the illumined, cannot have the same locus and possess the relationship of an object and its attribute. Applying this general rule, we conclude that because the ego is illumined by the consciousness of the Atman, the former cannot be an attribute of the latter, and both of them cannot have the same locus. The scriptures, therefore, proclaim that the ego is a false superimposition on the Consciousness. This unreal and imaginary ego cannot create any distinction in the non-dual homogeneous Atman or its consciousness. It is really an attribute of the internal organ, the Antahkarana. appears to be in the Atman due to ignorance of the real nature of the Atman.

कणनुयमचीक्लृपर्दात्मगुणं,

गुणपूगमर्नत्यमनात्मगुणम् ◌्।

अनयैव र्ृदशा स र्नरार्ियतां,

न र्ह र्नत्यमर्नत्यगुणेन गुर्ण ॥ २५

Kanabhugyam-achiklripad-atmagunam
gunapugam-anityam-anatmagunam,
Anayaiva disa sa nirakriyatam
na hi nityam-anitya-gunena guni.

र्वयतः प्रव्ं प्रवर्दन्त्त यतः,
श्रुयतो बह्वुशः ि◌मर्नत्यमतः ।
उपमानमर्नत्यगुणं र्वयतो,
नर्ह र्नत्यर्महार्स्त कणार्दकृते ।।२६

Viyatah prabhavam pravadantiyatah
srutayo bahusah kham-anityam-atah,
Upamanam-anitya-gunam viyato
nahi nityam-ihasti kanada-krite.

मनसा पुरुषः पुरुषेण मनो,
नस्ा मुसलं मुसलेन न्ः ।
न र्ह योगर्वयोगमुपैर्त कृतो
वयर्वत्वर्नराकरणार्दमुतः ।।२७

Manasa purushah purushena mano
nabhasa musalam musalena nabhah,
Na hi yoga-viyogam-upaiti krito-
vayavitva-nirakaranad-amutah.

इह रज्जुर्ि◌र्द्द र्ह सावयवं,

समुपैर्त युजार्मतरेतरतः ।

इर्त दृष्टमतोऽन्यर्ददृष्टमर्प,

स्वयमूह्यर्मर्दं ंन पररत्यजँता ॥ २८

Iha rajjughatadi hi savayavam

samupaiti yujam-itaretaratah,

Iti drishtam-atonyad-adrishtam-api

svayam-uhyam-idam na parityajata.

न र्ह सावयवं र्वगतावयवै

र्वगतावयवं च न सावयवैः ।

उपयार्त युजार्मर्त दृष्टर्मर्दं,ं

यतएवमतः स्र्थतमुक्तमर्दः॥ २९

Na hi savayavam vigatavayavair-

vigatavayavam cha na savayavaih,

Upayati yujam-iti drishtam-idam

yata-evam-atah sthitam-uktam-adah.

Sri Totakacharya takes up one aspect of the Vaiseshika philosophy which goes counter to the above Vedantic conclusion and argues why we should transcend the former and stick on to the latter. The founder of this philosophical system is the great Sage Kanada. This is one of the six Darsanas which are the conclusions of direct experience by 'Seers', the remaining five being the Nyaya, Samkhya, Yoga, Purva-Mimamsa and Uttara Mimamsa or Vedanta. All the six Darsanas base their arguments on the Vedas. These six Darsanas take the aspirant step by step in a very systematic, scientific and graduated manner, from the level of consciousness of the ordinary man in which he takes the world as

real to the highest pinnacle of non-dual realisation where everything is pure Consciousness, the Absolute. They are not to be considered as six different schools opposing and fighting with one another. All of them have necessarily to be transcended to reach the Ultimate which cannot but include everything in its all-comprehensive nature. Can Consciousness exclude anything from its purview? The Advaita Vedanta which establishes that the Absolute is non-dual, one without a second, of the nature of pure Consciousness, free of both subjectivity and objectivity and which includes the universe and yet stands transcending it, has necessarily to include all the Darsanas, and remain transcending all of them. When consciousness rises higher and higher, it transcends the limitations of the previous stages, and in ordinary parlance one says that Vedanta refutes the earlier schools. Really there cannot exist any refutation in the all-inclusive, infinite Consciousness.

The Vaiseshikas state that the intellect, pleasure, pain, desire, hatred, effort, righteousness and unrighteousness form the attributes of the eternal Atman. These are really the attributes of the not-Atman. We have already proved that since there exists the relationship of the illuminant and illumined between the Atman and the ego, the latter cannot be the attribute of the former. Another reason for refuting the Vaiseshika theory is that non-eternal attributes can never inhere in the eternal Atman and eternal attributes cannot inhere in non-eternal objects. We do not see any such case in the world. For, when the attribute which is inseparable from the object perishes, the object also would perish. The Atman being imperishable, this cannot happen. Hence, the ego cannot be said to be the attribute of the Atman. If a non-eternal attribute were to be posited in the eternal Atman, the latter would also become non-eternal.

The Vaiseshikas argue that the attribute of sound which is non-eternal, inheres in the Akasa (ether) which is eternal. Similarly, the

perishable, non-eternal ego and other Vrittis such as desire, hatred, etc., can remain as the attributes of the eternal Atman.

The Vaiseshika philosophy considers Akasa as one of their nine eternal substances, the other eight being earth, water, fire, air, time, space, soul and mind. It treats the properties of sound, touch, etc., as non-eternal. Therefore it is that they advance the above analogy of Akasa and sound in support of their conclusion. The Vedanta philosophy transcends all the preceding five Darsanas, including the Samkhya which has only two eternal entities, the Purusha and Prakriti. Vedanta says that the Reality-Absolute is that which is not capable of being negated or modified or sublated or transcended by anything, by any means, in all the three periods of time, the past, present and future. The Atman or Brahman alone can satisfy this condition and everything other than It, therefore, comes under the unreal and perishable. Hence, Akasa which falls under the perishable not-Atman, cannot acquire the status of an eternal substance.

Further, all that is born or created is liable to die or be destroyed. Akasa, like all other objects is also a created entity, and hence it has to dissolve itself in the Atman from which it is born. This is proved from one's experience in deep sleep and Samadhi, where one does not see the Akasa which merges itself with the rest of duality in nescience and then finally into the Atman. The following Sruti texts support the fact of creation of Akasa: (a) From Brahman which is the same as the Atman, Akasa was created (Taittiriya Upanishad II-1). (b) He, the Purusha created Prana (Hiranyagarbha), from Prana, He created faith, Akasa, air, fire, water, earth, organs, mind, etc. (Prasna Upanishad VI-4). (c) From the navel of Paramatman was born Akasa (Purusha-sukta).

Hence Vedanta has included Akasa under the perishable not-Atman. The very premise in the analogy of the Vaiseshikas, viz., that Akasa is an eternal substance, is therefore undermined. The

whole analogy cannot stand the test of reason and Sruti and hence, the theory that the ego is an attribute of the Atman becomes unacceptable.

How can the Atman contact the ego or the ego contact the Atman? Can the partless Akasa effect any kind of contact with an object like a mace for example, or can a mace contact Akasa? The Atman and the Akasa are without parts, while the ego and the mace are with parts. Contact of the partless with those with parts, is impossible. Where there is no contact, there cannot be any separation either, for only objects in contact can be separated. This is another reason to refute the theory that the ego inheres in the Atman as an attribute.

In the world, we see mutual contact only between objects with parts like a pot and a coir, where both the objects are gross and perceptible to the eyes. Applying this behaviour of gross visible objects to subtle invisible objects, one can through reasoning come to the conclusion that only entities with parts can have mutual contact. It is not proper to go against direct perception and reasoning in the case of the Atman and Akasa and say that they, having no parts, can have contact with the ego and mace which have parts. One should not leave off reasoning based on direct perception in this world. Therefore, the rule in this empirical world, which is a matter of direct perception, is that an entity with parts cannot remain in contact with another entity without parts, and vice versa, as also two entities without parts cannot have contact with each other.

न ह्ं कल्पताग्समागमनं,

वगतावयवस्य रि्त कुतः ।

वतथत्वमर्तः सुदृढा तु यतः,

पररकल्पतवस्तुषु र्नत्यमतः॥ ३०

Na hi kalpitabhaga-samagamanam

vigatavayavasya ghateta kutah,

Vitathatva-matih sudridha tu yatah

parikalpita-vastushu nityam-atah.

A question is raised whether contact between those with parts and those without parts may not be said to take place figuratively or in a secondary sense. Everything here in this universe is a false superimposition on the only real Atman. Hence, from the ego and intellect down to the physical body everything is unreal. Real contact or union between an unreal, imaginary thing and the real Atman cannot be admitted. In the rope-snake analogy, can the snake superimposed on the rope bite the rope or do anything with it? Can the waters of a mirage, which is a superimposition on the sands of a desert due to illusion, wet the sands, or quench the thirst of a traveller? In both these illustrations, the answer is in the negative, because the snake and the water are illusory, while the rope and the sands are real in the empirical sense. Unreal superimposed objects cannot have any real contact with their substratum. If any kind of relation between them is attributed by any one, it can only be of an unreal character, as unreal as the superimposed snake and water. Hence, in a figurative or secondary sense also, no contact can be attributed between the Atman which is real, eternal, non-dual and without parts, and the unreal ego superimposed on due to ignorance. The Real can never have any real connection with the unreal.

इह वेर्दशरस्सु तर्दथरर्वर्दः,

प्रवर्दर्न्त समस्तजगत्प्रकृर्तम् ◌्।

परमात्मपर्दं ◌ंदृर्शम्मात्रवपु

धुरुवमेकमतोन्यर्दर्नत्यर्मर्ती ॥३१

Iha vedasirassu tadarthavidah
pravadanti samasta-jagatprakritim,
Paramatmapadam drisimatravapur-
dhruvam-ekam-atonyad-anityam-iti.

अतएव न कंचरुदुर्दाहरणं,
धुरुवमर्स्त परस्य र्वनार्शगुणम् ।
यतएवमतः र्स्थतमुक्तमर्दो,
न ह र्नत्यमर्नत्यगुणेन गुर्ण ॥ ३२

Ata eva na kimchid-udaharanam
dhruvam-asti parasya vinasigunam,
Yata evam-atah sthitam-uktam-adob
na hi nityam-anitya-gunena guni.

उपलभ्यमहंकरणं्वतुं,
क्षमते दृर्शरूपगुणो न यतः ।
र्वषयाकृर्तरंर्जतधीगुण वत्
र्वषयत्वमहंकरणस्य ततः॥ ३३

Upalabhyam-ahamkaranam bhavitum
kshamate drisirupa-guno na yatah,
Vishayakriti-ramjita-dhigunavat-
vishayatvam-ahamkaranasya tatah.

Therefore is enunciated the following conclusion of Vedanta: In this world, those who know the secret imports of the Upanishads, know that the Sat-Chit-Ananda Paramatman is both the Vivarta

Upadana and Nimitta Karana, the fictitious material and instrumental cause for the whole universe which is a superimposition on It due to nescience, and which is therefore in essence the same Sat-Chit-Ananda itself, the pure, unobjectified Consciousness, eternal and non-dual; and everything other than It is Mithya or unreal appearance from the viewpoint of the Absolute, but appears to be real from the empirical standpoint.

This has the full support of the Sruti: Brahman is verily one and non-dual-says the Chhandogya Upanishad (VI-2-i). Eternal, manifesting in infinite forms, all-pervading, subtler than the subtlest, without diminution and the ultimate source of everything-the wise see It as the Self of all-says the Mundaka Upanishad (I-1-vi). All this is verily Brahman-declares certainly the the Nrisimha Uttara Tapaniya Upanishad (7). All this is Atman-proclaims the Chhandogya Upanishad (VII-25-ii). Know everything as Sat-Chit-Ananda; It pervades everything; It is non-dual, decayless, alone and other than all; It is 'T' and Thou; It alone is Akasa; there is in It no mind, no intellect, no subconscious, no ego, nor the aggregate of all this-says the Tejobindu Upanishad (VI-1 to 3). The Vedas are replete with innumerable similar immortal declarations.

The Sat-Chit-Ananda Nirguna Svarupa is the causeless cause of the universe, while That which transcends that and which is beyond thought and speech but expressed by the Sages and the scriptures through words such as the Reality, the Absolute, the Atman-Brahman, etc., is free of all relationship, the Nishpratiyogika Brahman. The Sat-Chit-Ananda Nirguna Brahman, Vedanta says, is the Vivarta Upadana and Nimitta Karana of the universe, i.e., It forms the substratum for the appearance of the universe, just as in this world a piece of rope forms the substratum for the appearance of a snake in twilight darkness. Even as the snake is illusory with reference to the empirically real world, so this empirical universe also, say the scriptures, is illusory with reference to the Absolute.

At the time of perceiving the snake in the rope, the snake was not illusory but was real, as real as the empirical objects appear to be now. Even so, we see the world also as real during this empirical existence. 'Real' and 'unreal' are relative terms carrying certain meanings with reference to the empirical world, to which we attribute degrees of reality. The dream experiences which we say in the waking state are unreal, were real at the time of dreaming. The real becomes unreal, and vice versa, the unreal becomes real. But both these real and unreal disappear in another level of consciousness, viz., deep sleep when everything merges itself into the ultimate cause, the Sat-Chit-Ananda. Excepting the Absolute Experience which is no experience in the ordinary sense of the term, being devoid of the triad of experiencer, experienced and experience, all other experiences whether empirical or illusory as in the waking and dreaming states or causal as in deep sleep state, are constituted of both truth and error. In the Experience-Absolute which is undifferentiated all the universe exists in its true essence, the pure Consciousness. There is no distinction of truth and error. Sage Ribhu gives a description of the Absolute to sage Nidagha who prays for instructions on the discrimination of the Atman and not-Atman. The Tejobindu Upanishad (Chapters V and VI) giving an exposition on the Atman is one of the most sublime and awe-inspiring revelations the like of which is difficult to find in any other scripture. All this universe is the Absolute Reality itself. There is naught other than the Reality. The 'T', 'you' and 'he', 'this' and 'that' are all unreal. They are nothing but the Reality which transcends duality and non-duality. One should transcend all empirical experiences including the illusory ones and have the conviction 'I am the Reality, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute'. Then should one transcend that also, and remain as That which is beyond all thought and speech.

How can the ego become an attribute of the Atman, the Absolute of the above description! The Vaiseshikas have not got even a single valid analogy in support of their theory. The unknown can be known only through the known. The reasoning faculty of man should be convinced with known illustrations from the empirical world before it can accept anything beyond the empirical realm. The Vaiseshikas have failed to give an authentic analogy to prove that a non-eternal ego can inhere in the eternal Atman. At the same time, analogies are not wanting to prove the Advaita Vedantic view that the ego cannot become the attribute of the Atman. The ego, and the objects which are said to be illumined by the intellect are really illumined by the consciousness of the Atman. Hence all of them come under the 'seen'. When the ego identifies itself with pleasure and pain in such Vrittis as 'I am happy', 'I am miserable', etc., the consciousness of the Atman illumines both the ego and the Vrittis. Just as pleasure and pain are perceived by the ego and therefore come under 'objects seen', the ego also comes under 'objects seen', and cannot therefore become the attribute of the eternal, changeless Atman.

Section III

MAHA VAKYA-TAT-TVAM-ASI

WHAT IT MEANS

From the beginning of creation our sages and scriptures have been dinning into our ears that this phenomenal universe with all its infinite variety which includes the individual Jiva and God, is really non-dual Brahman, the Truth Supreme which is beyond the reach of the mind and speech and that Its realisation is the only unfailing panacea for all the ills of humanity. The fact that the vast majority are not able to understand this great Truth, It being beyond the realm of the intellect, cannot in any way justify any attempt to drag It down to the empirical level. The different schools of

philosophy in trying to explain the Truth indirectly attempt at encompassing It within the purview of the intellect. Starting from the grossest matter and passing through its more subtle forms such as vital force, mind, intellect and the ego, they reach up to consciousness. While all these are manifestations of the Truth, and therefore the Truth alone, to say that any one of these alone is the Truth cannot be the right conclusion.

वषयप्रकृतं प्रतपन्नवतीं,

मतवृत्तमहंकरणं च मतेः ।

उयं् पररपश्यत योऽवकृतः,

परमात्मसरुदुक्तरसौ पुरुषः ॥ ३४

Vishayaprakritim pratipannavatim

mativrittim-ahamkaranam cha mateh,

Ubhayam paripasyati yovikritahb

paramatma-saduktir-asau purushah.

That which illumines the Buddhi-Vrittis in the form of sense-objects perceived through the senses, and also that Vritti in the form of the ego, the seer of these objects, is the Atman, the changeless Witness who is the same as Brahman or Paramatman- says the Author. This most sacred and secret Truth which at the same time remains
ever-revealed, is expressed by the Upanishads through the Maha Vakyas (Great Sentences, Great Declarations). To the uninitiated these Maha Vakyas do not reveal their real import. They may fail to find even a sensible meaning in them. One such Maha Vakya is Tat Tvam Asi (You are That) occurring in the Chhandogya Upanishad belonging to the Sama Veda. Three other important Vakyas are Aham Brahma Asmi (I am Brahman) of the Yajur-

Veda, Prajnanam Brahma (Consciousness is Brahman) of the Rig-Veda, and Ayam Atma Brahma (This Atman is Brahman) of the Atharva Veda. There are other similar Maha Vakyas also scattered throughout in the Upanishadic portion of the Vedas such as 'Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma'-All this is verily Brahman (Chhandogya Upanishad III-14-i), 'Atmaivedam Sarvam'-All this is verily the Atman (Chhandogya Upanishad VII-25-ii), Idam Sarvam Yad Ayam Atma'-That which all this is the Atman (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV-5-vii), etc. All these sentences reveal the identity of the Atman with Brahman.

The primary meanings of the two words 'You' and "That' in the sentence 'You are That' are the individual Jiva subjected to pleasure and pain of transmigration caught up in this body, and the supreme God with the attributes of creation, protection and dissolution, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence, respectively. It is difficult to identify these two, the Jiva and God, because of their apparent contradictory nature. Therefore, their usual primary meanings have to be left off and the secondary or implied meanings alone accepted. This implied meaning of both the words, say the scriptures, is the same pure Consciousness free of all attributes, and hence, the two words are connected with the verb 'Asi'-are.

With a view to further clarify the sentence, certain questions are raised and answered:

ननु र्देहरृदेृष कथं व्ता-

र्रृहतः परमात्मसरुदुर्क्तिररर्त ।

न र्वरुद्धमवार्र्दषमेतमहं,

श्रुर्तरप्यमुमथरमुवाच यतः ॥ ३५

Nanu dehabhridesha katham bhavata-

bhihitah paramatma-saduktir-iti,

Na viruddham-avadisham-etam-aham
srutir-apyamum-artham-uvacha yatah.

अमतं न मतेरमतस्तर्र्दर्दं,
यर्दमुत्रतर्देव तु कर्रि्र्दर्त ।

श्रुंर्तषु प्रर्तपार्र्दतमस्य दृशे,

परमात्मपर्दत्वममूषुशूम् ॥ ३६

Amatam na mater-amatas-tad-idam
yadamutra tadeva tu kaschiditi,
Srutishu pratipaditam-asya driseh
paramatmapadatvam-amushu-bhrisam.

यर्दनभ्युर्र्दतं वर्दनेन सर्दा,
नयनेन च पश्यर्त यन्न सर्दा ।

श्रवणेन च यन्न शृणोर्त सर्दा,

मनसार्प च यन्मनुते न सर्दा ॥ ३७

Yadanabhyuditam vadanena sada
nayanena cha pasyati yanna sada,
Sravanena cha yanna srinoti sada
manasa-api cha yanmanute na sada.

वर्दनं नयनं च तथा श्रवणं,
मन एव च येन मतं सततम् ।
अवगच्छ तर्देव पर्दं परमं,

त्वमर्तश्रुरुतरीक्षतुरुक्तवती॥ ॥३८

Vadanam nayanam cha tatha sravanam

mana eva cha yena matam satatam,

Avagaccha tadeva padam paramam

tvam-iti-srutir-ikshitur-uktavati.

परमात्मपर्दत्व इयं च मया,

श्रुर्तरल्पकणोर्क्तररर्हा्रहता ।

अर्णमार्द् गुणं सर्द्दर्त प्रकृतं,

तर्दर्सत्वमर्त श्रुर्तरभ्यवर्दत् ॥३९॥

Paramatmapadatva iyam cha maya

srutir-alpakanoktir-ihabhihita,

Animadi-gunam saditi prakritam

tadasi-tvam-iti srutir-abhyavadat.

How can the individual Jiva in this body be said to be the same as the supreme Brahman? The doubt that arises in the mind is how the Jiva, an individual person, encased in this little body, most insignificant compared to the vast universe, localised in a particular spot in a corner of the planet called earth, subjected to the three limitations due to space, time and objects, with imperfect objective knowledge, and tossed like a piece of straw by the waves of happiness and misery in the vast ocean of metempsychoses, be the same as the great, attributeless, infinite, non-dual Brahman, the pure Existence- Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. The experience one gets every moment in one's life does not in any way seem to support the identity of the two which seem to be at the two extreme opposite poles from every point of view. On the other hand, it seems to

contradict it at every step. From morning when one rises up from the bed, till one goes to bed at night, one sees only duality external to oneself, ever in a state of flux, causing pleasure and pain alternately. In deep sleep, when one does not experience the external world, one does not see oneself also. One seems to be lost in sleep. Coming out of sleep, one experiences either the waking world or the dream world distinct from oneself. The intellect, however much it may strain, is not able to go beyond itself, and so long as one remains within its realm, one cannot escape the experience of duality. How can such an individual Jiva be said to be the same as the non-dual Brahman of the nature of Sat-Chit-Ananda? Sri Totakacharya replies that the only available proof for this supramundane Truth is the scriptures and quotes profusely from the Upanishads.

The first quotation-Amatam is from the Br. Up. (III-8-xi). Sage Yajnavalkya, replying Gargi's questions about the nature of the ultimate Reality, says: "This Akshara - the immutable, O Gargi, is never seen but is the Witness, It is never heard but is the Hearer, It is never thought of but is the Thinker, It is never known but is the Knower. There is no other witness but This, no other hearer but This, no other thinker but This, no other knower but This. By this Immutable, O Gargi, is the Unmanifested ether pervaded."

The second citation-Na mateh-is also from the same Upanishad (III-4-ii). It is a part of the reply given by Sage Yajnavalkya to sage Ushasta who wanted to be enlightened about Brahman that is immediate and direct, and insisted that Brahman should be shown to him as one would show a cow or a horse. To him, Yajnavalkya replies: "Brahman is your Self that is within all. You cannot hear That which is the hearer of hearing, you cannot think That which is the thinker of thought, you cannot know That which is the knower of knowledge. That is your Self, That is within all, everything else but That is perishable."

The third-Amatah-is again from the same Upanishad (III-7-xxiii). Sage Uddalaka questions Yajnavalkya about the Atman, the Inner Ruler. "He who inhabits the five elements, heaven, sun, quarters, moon and stars, ether, darkness, light, all beings, all organs, mind and intellect, who is within all of them, whom none of them knows, whose body is all of them, and who controls them from within, is the Inner Ruler, your own Immortal Self," says Sage Yajnavalkya. He concludes by saying: "He is never seen but is the Witness, He is never heard but is the hearer, He is never thought of but is the Thinker, He is never known but is the Knower. There is no other witness but Him, no other hearer but Him, no other thinker but Him, no other knower but Him. He is the Inner Ruler, your own Immortal Self. Everything else but Him is mortal."

The next-Tat-also from the same Upanishad (II-5-xix) forms part of the Mantra on secret meditation on things mutually helpful, which is taught by Sage Dadhyach to the twin gods, the Asvins. Sage Kakshivat who is the seer of the Mantra says: The supreme Brahman transforms Himself in accordance with each form. He puts on so many forms to make Himself known. On account of the false identification with name and form, the Lord appears as though manifold. For, to Him are yoked the ten organs called Hari, nay hundreds of them as there are infinite beings. He Himself has become the organs. He Himself has become tens and thousands, many and infinite. That Brahman is without prior or posterior, without interior or exterior. The supreme Self, the perceiver of everything is Brahman. This is the gist of all Upanishadic teachings. Or this citation may refer to the Maha Vakya, 'Tat Tvam Asi'.

The next one-Idam-is from the Br. Up. (IV-5-vii). It forms part of the sublime instructions of Sage Yajnavalkya to Maitreyi: "All abandon one who thinks the all as different from the Self. This

Brahmana, this Kshatriya, these worlds, these gods, Vedas, beings and all are this Self".

The sixth quotation-Yadamutra-is taken from the Katha-Upanishad (II-1-x) embodying the instructions of the Lord of Death to the young Nachiketas who in obedience to his father's commandment goes to the abode of Death to learn the knowledge of the Self. To him the Lord of Death says: "What indeed is here, is there, what is there is here likewise, he who sees as though there is difference here goes from death to death".

The seventh-Tadeva-is from the Kena Upanishad (1-5). The full Mantra says: "That which is not uttered by speech, That by which speech is revealed, know That alone to be Brahman and not what people worship as an object".

The eighth-Kaschit-is again from the Katha- Upanishad (II-1-i) which says: "The self-existing Lord inflicted the senses with outward-going tendency, and therefore, one sees outer objects and not the inner Self. A rare discriminating man aspiring for immortality turns his eyes away and then sees the indwelling Self".

The ninth quotation from the Kena Upanishad says: "That which cannot be uttered through speech but by which speech is revealed, That which is not seen through the eyes but by which the eyes get their power of seeing forms and colours, That which is not thought of by the mind but by which the mind is able to think all thoughts, and That which is not heard through the ears but by which the ears are enabled to hear sounds-That is the Atman and That is also Brahman. In other words, That by which all the ten external organs and the mind, the internal one, are illumined and enabled to do their respective functions-That Supreme Brahman, the Seer art Thou".

These are only a few among the innumerable similar Mantras occurring in the Upanishads declaring the identity of the Atman with Brahman. The nature of the Atman such as its subtlety and Its

identity with Brahman are clearly explained in the Chhandogya Upanishad Mantras beginning with "In the beginning, dear boy, this was Being (Sat) alone, one only, without a second". Being is Existence-Absolute, without these names and forms-gross and subtle-, extremely subtle, indefinable, all-pervading, one, taintless, indivisible, pure Consciousness, as expounded through the implied meaning of Maha Vakyas. The words 'one only' in this Mantra rules out the possibility of Brahman really becoming many in its manifestations. It never becomes essentially many even when It appears to manifest itself as this universe. It is free from the two kinds of differences, viz., intrinsic differences and those in the same species. second' deny all extrinsic The words 'without a differences. If material and instrumental causes for the appearance of this universe are sought for, in order to provide an explanation for the duality of the universe in the non-dual Brahman, they are both this Being itself. Thus, we come to the conclusion that the universe which at present is Being alone and known by the intellect and is indicated by the word 'this' was, in the beginning, i.e., before creation, only known as Existence-Absolute and pointed out by the word 'Being'. "That Being willed: 'May I become many, may I grow forth'; It created fire. That fire willed: 'may I become many, may I grow forth'. It created water," and so on, the whole creation was projected. "This Deity-Brahman entered into these three deities through the living Self and differentiated names and forms". "That Being which is this subtle essence, even That all this world has for its Self, That is the true, That is the Atman, That Thou Art, O Svetaketu".

The Author raises the question: "Can the Atman be considered as a modification or a part of Brahman?" and explains how both are unreasonable, through the illustration of the sky-ether and pot-ether.

नस्ोऽवयवो र्वकृर्ति यथा,

र्ंकिार्ंदनो् न वे्तुतु तथा ।

परमात्मन एष न चावयवो,

र्वकृर्ति शरीररूर्दत्यमृषा ॥ ४०

Nabhaso-vayavo vikritischa yatha

ghatikadi-nabho na bhavettu tatha,

Paramatmana esha na chavayavo

vikritischa sarirabhridityamrisha.

The ether in a pot gets the appellation 'pot-ether', but on that account does the sky-ether ever said to be with parts? No. Nor do we say that the sky-ether is changed because of the ushering in of the pot-ether. The pot-ether cannot therefore be said to be either a part of the sky-ether or its modification. Similarly, even though the Atman or Brahman as though limited by a body, is called by the name of Jiva, the embodied soul, etc., it does not become a part of Brahman, nor does the non-dual Brahman become possessed of parts or undergo any change on that account. To explain further, the space enclosed in a pot, a house, and such other objects, appears limited by those objects and each such limited space is differentiated from the others and from the universal space in empirical dealings. But all very well know that the universal space remains unaffected by the innumerable limitations. It does not become different from the limited spaces. The different names given to the same space on account of the several limiting adjuncts for empirical transactions are mere imaginations of the mind superimposed on the one homogeneous, universal space. Even so, the one non-dual indivisible Consciousness in which differences such as Jiva, Isvara, etc., are superimposed due to nescience, remains unchanged and undivided, for, all differentiations are

unreal. Hence, they can neither be said to be parts nor a transformation of Brahman.

If in reality, there is no difference between the Atman and Brahman, why then the scriptures have used two different names for one and the same Reality? The answer is:

करकार्द्दर्नर्मत्तकमेव यथा,

करकाम्बरनाम वे्रि्यतः ।

परमात्मदृशेरर्प नाम तथा,

पुरहेतुकमेव तु जीव इर्त ॥४१

Karakadi-nimittakam-eva yatha

karakambara nama bhaved-viyatah,

Paramatma-driser-api nama tatha

purahetukam-eva tu jiva iti.

A pot is the cause for the creation of pot-ether in the sky-ether. There is really no differentiation between the two ethers. It is due to delusion that we speak as though they are different. Similarly, the body becomes the cause for the Jiva appearing as though distinct from Paramatman. There is no real difference created in Brahman as It does not permit of any differentiation, It being non-dual. Hence follows the conclusion that the Jiva or the Atman is verily the same as Brahman, even though different names are used.

Another reason supporting the same conclusion is:

जर्नतं र्वयर्दग्रर्णयेन जगत्,

परमात्मसर्दक्षरनामत्ा ।

प्रर्ववेश स एव जगत्स्वकृतं,

र्मिवेह रिं रि्सृष्टमनु ॥ ४२॥

Janitam viyadagrani-yena jagat
paramatma-sadakshara-nama-bhrita,
Pravivesa sa eva jagat-svakritam
kham-iveha ghatam ghata-srishtimanu.

उपपद्यत िप्रमिुं ह्ं जगत्, ्
परमात्मन इत्यप याः श्रुतयः ।
अवधायरत अ्रि्ेर्दमर्तः,

परमात्मसतत्वसमपरणतः ॥ ४३ ॥

Udapadyata khapramukham hi jagat
paramatmana ityapi yah srutayah,
Avadharyata abhir-abhedamatih
paramatma-satatva-samarpanatah.

यर्द सृष्टर्वधानपरंवचनं,
फलशून्यमनथरकमेव वे्त् ्।
जगर्द्दत्थमजायतधातुरुरर्त,

श्रवणं पुरुषस्य फलाय नह्ी।।४४

Yadi srishti-vidhanaparam vachanam
phalasunyam-anarthakam-eva bhavet,
Jagadittham-a jayata-dhatur-iti
sravanam purushasya phalaya nahi.

अनृतत्वमवाद्यसकृरि्कृतेः,

र्नरधारर सर्देव तु सत्यर्मर्त ।

श्रुर् र्त्बरहुधै तर्दतोऽवगतं,

जगतो नर्ह जन्म र्वधेयर्मर्ती॥४५

Anritatvam-avadyasakrid-vikriteh

niradhari sadeva tu satyam-iti,

Srutibhir-bahudhaitadatovagatam

jagato na hi janma vidheyam-iti.

From that Brahman also called by the names of Sat, Akshara, etc., the whole universe beginning from the ether has come out. Into that universe created by Himself, He entered, just as the pot-ether may be said to enter into the pot after it is made. The Taittiriya Upanishad (II. 1) says: "From that Brahman, which is the Atman, was born ether. From ether came out air. From air was born fire. From fire was created water and from water earth was born. And from earth, herbs, food and man were born". Mantra II-6 of the same Upanishad says: "That Brahman, having created them entered into that very thing, and having entered these, It became the objects with form and without form, the defined and undefined, the sustaining and non-sustaining, the sentient and the non-sentient and the true and the untrue". Do not such Vedic texts dealing with creation of the universe mean the existence of duality? The reply is: The creation of everything starting from ether is only an unreal, superimposition on the non-dual indivisible Atman. Brahman's entering into Its own creations should be considered only in a figurative sense, because It is all-pervasive like the ether and there is no space where It is not, at any time. Entrance of a thing can be predicated only in the case of limited objects. Brahman being free from all the three kinds of limitations due to time, space and objects, the statement of the Upanishad has to be taken only in a

secondary sense. As in the analogy of the pot-ether, where ether being all-pervasive, cannot be absent at any place and hence its entrance into the pot after it is made, is stated only in a secondary sense, Brahman's entry into every object in this universe is also made only in a subsidiary sense. No one can predicate entrance of Brahman which is non-dual, eternal, all-pervading and indivisible. The creation of the universe from Brahman and the entrance of Brahman into the universe are intended to prove the identity of Brahman and the universe.

"From Him originate the vital force (Prana) as well as the mind, all the senses, space, air, fire, water and earth that supports everything" - says the Mundaka Upanishad (II-1-iii). Commenting on this Mantra, Acharya Sankara says: "The vital force which is an object and a modification of nescience, exists only in name and is essentially unreal. Just as a man who has no son does not become possessed of one by seeing him in dream, even so, the Supreme Reality cannot become possessed of the vital force by being endowed with a vital force that is included in nescience and is unreal. In this way, the mind, senses as well as objects originate from this One. Therefore, it is proved that Purusha is devoid of vital force, etc., in the real sense of the term". Thus the whole universe, which is mere name only is unreal with reference to the Paramatman, the Reality Absolute, and since Paramatman alone has in the form of the Jiva entered into the bodies, the Jiva is Paramatman alone.

Vedanta texts dealing with creation have no interest in their literal meanings. If those texts were to be interpreted literally and considered as dealing with real creation, the purpose of the Sruti would be defeated. For, hearing of such real creation by spiritual aspirants will not serve the fulfilment of their objective namely liberation. Vedas speak about creation of the universe as the Tatastha Lakshana of Brahman for the sake of those middle class

aspirants who are not able to grasp the Svarupa Lakshana. When the aspirant is found incapable of understanding and realising the real nature of the Reality which is non-dual, immanent and transcendental, Existence- Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, due to his confused intellect, he is directed to meditate on It as the cause for the creation, protection and final dissolution of this visible phenomenal universe. The aspirant, by reflection and deep meditation on these temporary characteristics superimposed knowingly and with a purpose, will be able to realise the Sat-Chit-Ananda nature of Brahman. Can he attain the Real by meditating on the unreal? He can, says Sri Swami Vidyaranya in his Panchadasi. Just as in this world there are instances of errors leading to right knowledge (Samvadi Bhrama), meditation on Brahman with attributes is capable of taking the aspirant to the attributeless Brahman. By saying that this world was created by Brahman, what the scriptures want to establish is the non-difference between the two, the cause and effect. They have not the least intention to establish the existence of a real world apart from the non-dual Brahman. In the rope-snake illustration, the man who knows the truth, in conveying the truth about the rope to the other who sees the snake due to delusion, accepts for the time being the presence of the snake, though the former knows for certain that there is really no snake, and then removes the misconception of the latter by denying the existence of a real snake. Even so, the Sruti in order to satisfy the deluded intellect of the ignorant, accepts for the time being, the existence of the universe, posits a cause for its creation, protection and dissolution, and then step by step through a process of de-superimposition, removes the illusion, thus effecting the revelation of the Truth Supreme. No good would accrue to the aspirant if he is to be told that God really created a real world apart from Himself, for all in the ignorant state have this idea alone and as a result suffer from the cycle of transmigration. On the other hand, Sruti texts such as 'The knower of Brahman

attains the highest Brahman', 'You are That', 'A knower of Brahman goes beyond grief', etc., prove that the knowledge of the non-dual nature of Brahman and the phenomenal nature of the universe bestows the greatest auspiciousness, the Supreme Good on the hearer. The Upanishadic texts on creation have therefore to be understood as supplementary and subservient to the Maha Vakyas establishing the non-dual, eternal and real nature of the Supreme and the unreal and transient nature of the universe.

Through the Upanishadic portion, the Vedas have repeatedly stated that this universe being a modification or effect, is unreal and that Brahman its cause is the only reality unaffected in all the three periods of time, the past, present and future. This is another reason to prove that the Vedas have neither desire nor interest in speaking about any real creation of a real world, through the texts describing creation.

All modification is but name based on words and therefore unreal- say the Chh. Up. seven times. The same Upanishad proclaims nine times the truth of the identity of the Atman and Brahman in the following words: 'O Svetaketu, That is the Truth, That is the Atman, That Thou Art'. There are several other similar declarations in the Upanishads to support both these two facts.

If one wants to establish that an object like a pot in front of one is 'really' a pot, all his logical arguments would prove futile, for all the scriptures would join together to prove that the pot, as it is, is merely an imaginary name and form superimposed on the Atman, and what we call a pot is really the Atman in essence. On the other hand, if one tries to establish the non-dual nature of the Atman, by proving that objects like a pot, etc., in this universe are in essence the Atman alone, all the scriptures and sages would be behind that one and extend their full support.

All these would prove that the Sruti's interest is not in the creation of a separate, real universe, but is only in the establishment of the non-duality of the Atman-Brahman. Continuing the trend the Author says:

न च तत्त्वमसीत्यसकृिचनं

जगतो जर्नमात्रर्वधौ ,रि्ते

परमात्मपर्दानुमर्तं तु यर्दा

जनयेत्पुरुषस्य तर्दा रि्ते॥ ४६

Na cha tattvamasityasakrid-vachanam

jagato janimatra-vidhau ghatate,

Paramatmapadanumatim tu yada

janayet-purushasya tada ghatate.

स्थरजंगमर्देहर्धयां चररतं,

पररपश्यर्त योऽर्वकृतः पुरुषः ।

परमात्मसरुदुर्त्तरसार्वर्त यत्,

ृणतं तर्दर्धरि्तर्मथ्तमहम् ॥४७

Sthira-jangama-dehadhiyam charitam

paripasyati yovikritah purushah,

Paramatmasaduktir-asaviti yat

bhanitam tadadhishthiyam-itthamaham.

पृथगेव यर्दाऽक्षरतो मर्तर्व्द्

मकरोर्दकवन्न रि्म्बरवत् ।

न र्वरोत्स्यर्त तत्त्वमसीर्त तर्दा,

वचनं कथमेषत इत्यर्प चा॥ ४८

Prithageva yadaksharato mativid

makarodakavanna ghatambaravat,

Na virotsyati tattvamasiti tada

vachanam katham-eshata ityapi cha.

The Maha Vakya 'Tat Tvam Asi' has been repeated so many times in the Vedas. Its meaning can never be reconciled with the texts describing creation if the latter were to mean real creation of a real universe. Only that meaning which would be helpful to the dawn of the knowledge of Brahman will be in consonance with the Maha Vakya, which enunciates identity of Jiva and Brahman. Sage Uddalaka, through a series of arguments and illustrations, instructs his son Svetaketu on the implied meaning of the Maha Vakya. Hence the literal or surface meaning of the creation texts would contradict the established and accepted import of the Sruti, and the aspirants after liberation should reject the former completely.

The actions or movements of everything here- the movables and immovables, this body, intellect and its modifications -- are known (illumined) by the immutable Atman, who is called Brahman or Paramatman, in the scriptures. Thus is established the identity of the Jiva and Brahman.

In the Sruti texts such as: 'Crave to know That from which they live and That into which they dissolve-That is Brahman' (Taittiriya Upanishad III-1), "That Brahman having created the universe entered into that very thing' (Taittiriya Upanishad II-6), 'He who dwells in all beings and is within them all, whom the beings do not know, whose body and organs are the same as those of all beings and who directs all beings to their functions within is the Inner Controller, your own immortal Self, as also mine, and that of all beings' (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad III-7-xv), etc., describing

creation, protection, dissolution, entrance, control, etc., there lies hidden the common import of non-difference between the Atman and the universe. Such texts are eulogical in nature and they praise the Supreme Being and establish Its non-dual nature and the unreal nature of everything other than It superimposed on It due to nescience.

The individual Jiva and Brahman are not different like the water and a fish swimming in it, but are identical and completely non-different like the pot-ether and the sky-ether. While the truth is this, if one entertains a contrary conception that the Jiva and Brahman are distinct like the water and the fish and that they are not identical like the ether inside a pot and that in the sky, nobody can prevent one's being subjected to the miseries of transmigratory life of births and deaths, for untruth always brings suffering alone. How can the Supreme Good come to such a one? It can never happen in crores of births, says the Author.

MEDITATION AND MAHA VAKYA

In commenting on the last Mantra in the sixth Chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad dealing with the initiation of Svetaketu on the Maha Vakya Tat-tvam-asi (You are That) by his father-Sage Uddalaka Aruni, Acharya Sankara raises the question: "Who is this Svetaketu signified by the term "Tvam"?" And he replies that it is he who after hearing the instruction reflects over it and knows it and then thinks "I am Svetaketu, the son of Uddalaka", and who with a view to know That which is unheard of, unthought of and unknown, questions his father "O Bhagavan, of what nature is that Teaching". He is verily the Supreme Atman. But before hearing from the father, he did not know himself as the pure Existence, the Soul in all, separate from the aggregate of the five sheaths (Kosas). Now, after instructed by his father 'You are That', he is convinced through reasoning and illustrations that I am verily the Sat'. The Acharya then raises the following Purva Paksha-prima facie view: "If Svetaketu is really Brahman, why is he not aware of it; because he does not know the Truth, he is being instructed about It again and again. The Maha Vakya involves Upasana. It may after all be a figurative statement or may be an eulogical one' The Acharya then explains why the Maha Vakya should not be interpreted in such ways, and finally establishes that the sentence means only the Atman-Brahman identity which is revealed by destroying the illusory notion that the individual Atman is distinct from the Supreme Brahman.

Sri Totakacharya has dealt with this subject in a more exhaustive manner. The arguments of the Purva Pakshin here are:

न तु वस्तु सतत्ववर्बोधनकृरि्-

र्नवत्तरयर्दप्रर्तबोधर्मर्दम् ◌ि।

सरुद्पासनकमरर्वधान परं,

यत एवमतो न र्वरोत्स्यर्त मे॥ ४९

Na tu vastu-satatva-vibodhanakrid-
vinivartayad-apratibodham-idam,
Sadupasana-karma-vidhana-param
yata evam-ato na virotsyati me.

मन आर्ऱ्दषु कारणदृष्टर्वधः,
प्रर्तमासु च र्देवधयां करणम् ॑।
स्वमर्तह्यनपोह्य यथा तु तथा,
त्वमसीह सर्दात्ममर्तवरचनाᳫत् ॑॥ ५०

Mana-adishu karana-drishti-vidhih
pratimasu cha devadhiyam karanam,
Svamatim-hi-anapohya yatha tu tatha
tvamasiha sadatma-matir-vachanat.

अथवा त्वर्मर्त ध्वर्नवाच्यर्मर्दं,॑
सर्दसीर्त वर्दिचनं गुणतः ।
र्वयं् पुरुषं प्रवर्दर्न्त यथा,
मृगराडयमीश्वरगुप्त इर्त ॥ ५१ ॥

Athava tvamiti dhvanivachyam-idam
sadasiti vaded-vachanam gunatah,
Vibhayam purusham pravadanti yatha
mrigarad-ayam-isvaragupta iti.

यर्ऱ्द वा स्तुतुये सर्दसीर्त वर्देत्,॑
मर्वानर्स र्वष्णुरसीर्त यथा ।

त्वर्मर्त श्रुर्तवाच्यसतत्वकता

मथवासतएव वर्दिचनम्॥५२

Yadi va stutaye sadasiti vadet
maghavan-asi vishnur-asiti yatha,
Tvamiti srutivachya-satatvakatam
athava sata eva vaded-vachanam.

यर्द तत्त्वम-इर्त ध्वर्नर्न्र्हतः

परमात्मसतत्वकमेव सर्दा ।

र्कमर्त स्वकमेष न रूपमवेत्,

प्रर्तबोध्यत एव यतो वचनै॥ ५३

Yadi tattvam-iti dhvaninabhihitah
paramatma-satatvakam-eva sada,
Kim-iti svakam-esha na rupam-avet
pratibodhyataevayato vachanaih.

अत एव र्ह जीव सर्दात्मकतां,
न र्ह तत्तवमसीर्त वर्दिचनम् ।

यर्दपीदृशमन्यर्दतो वचनं,

तर्दप प्रथयेर्दनयैव र्ददशा ।। ५४ ॥

Ata-eva hi jiva-sadatmakatam
na hi tattvam-asiti vaded-vachanam,
Yad-apidrisam-anyad-ato vachanam
tad-api prathayed-anayaiva disa.

The Maha Vakya Tat-tvam-asi destroys the primeval nescience but does not impart the knowledge of the oneness of the Atman and Brahman, because the sentence enjoins Karma in the form of Sadupasana-worship combined with meditation of Brahman. It is further argued that this view does not contradict the Sruti; on the other hand the Sruti only supports it, for the Sruti enjoins various Upasanas and thereby accepts the difference that exists among the triad such as the meditator, meditation and the object of meditation. The Chh. Up. (III-18-i) instructs:

Mano-brahma-iti-upasita-One should worship and meditate on the mind as Brahman'. In another place (VII-12-ii) the same Upanishad similarly says: 'He who worships and meditates on Akasa (ether) as Brahman attains vast worlds full of light, etc.' These Sruti texts do not declare identity of the mind with Brahman or that of the Akasa with Brahman. Again in the worship of idols also, no one conceives the least idea of identity of the idol with the deity worshipped through it. Similarly, the Maha Vakya also instructs the seekers to meditate on the individual self as Brahman without leaving the idea of individuality, and the sentence does not therefore imply identity between them. In the Upasanas cited above, we superimpose the cause on the effect or certain characteristics of the object of meditation on the object meditated upon. In this process the objects thus meditated upon, such as the mind, the ether, the idol, etc., are not destroyed but continue to exist. Even so, the Maha Vakya enjoins the meditation on the Jiva as having the characteristics of Brahman.

In this world, a brave man is sometimes called a lion. Here the word
'lion' does not carry its primary meaning, but only a secondary one indicating one of his qualities, viz., bravery. Even so, in the Maha Vakya the word 'Tat' only qualifies the word 'Tvam'. The sentence, therefore, means that the individual Atman has the attributes of

sentience, immortality, bliss and other similar characteristics of Brahman, and it does not mean that the two are identical.

Poor people depending on the munificence of a millionaire, call him Indra or God, where the words 'Indra' and 'God' are only eulogistic. They never mean that the millionaire is really Indra or God. Even so, in the Maha Vakya, the individual Atman is said to be Brahman in a eulogistical sense and no identity is meant.

If the Maha Vakya is expressive of the non-difference of Jiva and Brahman, why the Jiva does not experience its identity with Brahman, its own real nature? From the fact of every one's experience of differentiation, the Maha Vakya cannot be said to mean the identity of the two.

For these reasons, it is argued by the Purva Pakshins that the Maha Vakya 'Tat-tvam-asi' instructs Upasana on the individual Atman as Brahman and does not instruct on their identity. For the same reasons, the other Maha Vakyas also, they say, enjoin only worship and meditation and do not mean that the Atman and Brahman are identical.

The reply of the Siddhantin is:

त्वरूदुर्दाहृतवाक्यर्वलक्षणता,
वचनस्य र्ह तत्त्वमसीर्त यतः ।

अतएव न दृष्टर्वधानपरं,

सत एव सर्दात्मकतागमक्मं् ॥५५

Tvadudahrita-vakya-vilakshanata
vachanasya hi tattvamasiti yatah,
Ata eva na drishti-vidhana-param
sata eva sadatmakata-gamakam.

The Vedic texts quoted in support of the above view are irrelevant in this context as they stand on a different footing from the Maha Vakyas. Therefore, the Maha Vakyas cannot be said to enjoin Upasana like the other sentences inculcating meditation on the mind, the ether, the idol, etc. The Maha Vakyas only instruct the qualified seeker after liberation that he is verily Brahman itself, of the nature of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. The arguments on which this conclusion is based, are discussed below:

The whole of the sixth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad containing 16 sections with 69 Mantras, gives an exposition of the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi', leading to the sublime truth of the identity of the individual Jiva with Brahman. Sage Uddalaka Aruni initiates his son Svetaketu into Brahma-Vidya through this Mahavakya. The father starts his instruction by saying that before creation of this phenomenal universe, this was Being alone, one only, without a second. It is through mere willing that the Being created the three elements fire, water and earth and then all living beings. Into all of them thus created, the Being entered as the Jiva-Atman and differentiated into all these names and forms. It is shown that all objects, being the effects of the three elements which are their causes, are unreal and that the causes alone are real. By a similar reasoning, it is shown that the mind, vital force and speech are also the effects of the three elements the earth, water and fire respectively, and therefore, unreal like all external objects.
Through enquiring into the true nature of hunger and thirst, their final source, the Supreme Deity is determined. It is proved that the food as the shoot, has water for its root; water as the shoot, has fire as its root; and finally fire as the shoot, has the Supreme Deity as its root. This Supreme Deity does not become a shoot (effect or object) and therefore further enquiry into its root (cause) cannot arise.

An enquiry into the state of deep sleep is then made. Like a bird tied to a long string, after flying in various directions as far as the string would allow, and finding no resting place elsewhere, takes refuge at the very place whereto it is tied, the mind after roaming about hither and thither in all directions during the waking and dream states, takes refuge in the Supreme Existence (Sat) alone, for the mind is attached to the Sat alone. This same conclusion is arrived at by an enquiry into the condition of a dying man in whom the speech merges in the mind, the mind in the vital force, the vital force into fire element and the fire element into the Supreme Deity- Being-, subtler than the subtlest. "This Being which is the subtle essence (cause) of everything in this universe is its Atman, That is the Reality, He is the Atman, That Thou Art, O Svetaketu" - says Uddalaka Aruni.

Then follows the Sage's further explanation clearing the eight doubts raised by his son. The doubts and their replies are summarised hereunder seriatum:

If in deep sleep and in death, the Jiva attains Brahman, why the Jiva is not aware of that fact at the time of sleep and death? The bees collect juices from the flowers of different trees and reduce them into one essence, honey. In this honey, the different juices themselves have no separate existence as distinct juices of different flowers, for they merge into one essence. Even so, the different Jivas merge into the Being during sleep and death and lose their separate individuality. Hence it is that the particularised knowledge of the merging is absent during sleep and death.

If the Jiva attains Brahman in sleep and death, why does it not become conscious of having come from the Supreme Being, when it wakes up from sleep, or is reborn after death? This is replied through the illustration of the rivers and the ocean. The waters of the rivers rise from the ocean as vapour and cloud, pour down as rain, flow as rivers and merge in the ocean again. There, in the

ocean the rivers have no separate existence as, say, Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, etc. Even so, the ignorant Jivas though they wake up from sleep and return after death from where they have been one with the Supreme Being, since they had no particularised knowledge of their existence as Brahman, they do not become conscious of that fact even after waking from sleep or reborn after death.

Why the ignorant Jiva is not destroyed when it merges in Brahman in sleep and death like the waves in the ocean, but comes back again? A tree if struck with an axe on any part of it, would exude sap because the whole tree is pervaded by the living Self in the form of Prana or life. When life leaves one branch, that branch alone dries up. Similarly in deep sleep, everything in man except the Prana, merges in the Being. In death, though the Prana also seems to merge, the subtle body does not die. It assumes another gross body and is born again. The Jiva completely merges in Brahman only through Perfect Knowledge (Samyag-jnana). Only a part of the personality merges temporarily both in sleep and in death. Hence the Jiva is not destroyed in sleep and death but wakes up after sleep and is reborn after death.

How can this extremely gross universe, with its diverse names and forms in endless space, come out of the most subtle Atman? A very big banyan tree comes out of a very minute seed inside which one could see nothing. Even so, comes this vast gross universe from the most subtle Atman.

If the subtle Atman is the root (cause) of this universe, why is that Being not perceived like the universe? Salt dissolved in water, though pervading the whole water, is not perceptible to the organ of sight, but its presence in the water can be known through another organ, viz., the palate. Similarly, Brahman the cause of the universes is all-pervasive and pervades the body, but cannot be

perceived by the sense-organs. However, there is another means to know the Atman.

What is the other means of knowing the Atman? A man blindfolded and bound up is taken to a desolate place and left there. A kindly disposed passer-by removes his bandage, frees him and directs him to his village. Being capable of judging by himself when instructed, by enquiring his way from place to place he reaches his own village. Even so, the man in bondage and ignorance comes to know the final goal of Brahman, through a preceptor who, through proper instruction and guidance, initiates him into the knowledge of Brahman. And, as soon as he is liberated from the body, he is merged in Being. The delay is only till he is freed from his body.

Is the knower of Brahman liberated only after leaving this body or is he liberated even while remaining in the body? At the time of death, speech merges into the mind, mind in Prana, Prana in Fire, and finally Fire in the Supreme Deity. This process is the same in the case of all, whether ignorant or wise. The man with the knowledge of Brahman has no rebirth, while the ignorant is born again according to his Karmas. The Knower does not go along the path of the sun or the moon. He is liberated even while he is in a body.

When both the ignorant and the liberated merge in Brahman at the time of death, what is the reason for the non-return of the liberated alone? It is said that in olden days there was the custom of asking persons charged with the crime of theft to hold a red-hot axe. If he had really committed the crime, his hand would be burnt. On the other hand, if he was honest, he would not be burnt. Just as in this case truth forms a covering, as it were, for his palm and saves it from being burnt by the red-hot axe, while untruth exposes him to the heat of fire, even so, the liberated man is saved by the Truth Absolute which he has realised, while the ignorant who is attached

to the untruth in the form of this world, is burnt through the fire of endless transmigration.

Svetaketu's doubts are cleared after hearing the above explanations and hearing the Maha Vakya from his father nine times.

In arriving at the meaning of the Maha Vakya Tat-tvam-asi' intended by the Vedas, Vedantic texts generally consider the primary and indicative meanings of the two words "Tat' and 'Tvam'. The primary meaning of the word "Tat' is God in His Saguna aspect, the creator, protector and destroyer of the universe. This term therefore refers to the combination of Maya, the reflection of Consciousness in Maya, and Consciousness. Similarly, the term 'Tvam' refers to the Jiva who is a combination of Avidya, the reflection of Consciousness in Avidya, and Consciousness. While God is omniscient, infinite, all-pervasive, immortal and unlimited, the Jiva is with little knowledge, finite, mortal, limited by space, time, etc. Therefore, God and Jiva with the above connotations, the primary meanings of the two words 'Tat' and 'Tvam', cannot be equated with each other, much less can they be identified with each other. These primary meanings are therefore to be discarded and their indicative meanings alone taken into consideration. In this process, the whole of the primary meanings of the two words are not to be set aside. Only those portions which are contradictory are to be rejected, retaining the non-contradicting parts. Through this process of arriving at the indicative meanings, the Jahad-Ajahad Lakshana or the Bhaga-Tyaga Lakshana as it is known in the Vedantic texts, the irreconcilable portion in the primary meanings of the words "Tat' and 'Tvam', viz., Maya with the reflected consciousness and the characteristics of omniscience, mediacy, etc., and Avidya with the reflected consciousness and the attributes of little knowledge, immediacy, suffering, etc., respectively, are eliminated. What remains after this elimination is the pure Consciousness in both the

cases, and their identity is thus arrived at. The word "Tat' signifies the innermost essence of the universe and the term 'Tvam' signifies the very same essence in the Jiva, which generally go by the appellations of Brahman and the Atman respectively, both signifying the same one, non-dual, pure Existence- Consciousness-Bliss.

Those schools of thought which oppose the above view of Advaita Vedanta, bring in several arguments against this interpretation of the Maha Vakya. In order to refute them, the adherents of Vedanta advance logical reasonings in support of their position. Some argue that in the Maha Vakya the word 'Tvam' means Kutastha, the pure, unchanging Consciousness, the same as that signified by the word Brahman. Others would say that the word 'Tvam' means the ego and hence it gets sublated completely leaving Brahman alone. Still some others would argue that the relationships of qualifier and qualified (Viseshana-Viseshya Bhava) and of indicator and indicated (Lakshana-Lakshya Bhava) exist between the two words, while still others refute these ideas. A section of the Vedantins of the post-Sankara period, interpret the Maha Vakya Tat-tvam-asi' to mean the identity of the Atman and Brahman not in the present, but on a future date when one attains Videha Mukti. This goes counter to those who argue that the sentence signifies an eternal condition, and the identity exists even now when one is ignorant, the only difference being that one does not realise it. Some staunch adherents of the dualist school go to the extent of reading the Maha Vakya as 'Atat-tvam-asi' meaning 'You are not-That'.

Whatever be the views of the different schools, all of them are acceptable in the all-comprehensive philosophy of the one, non-dual Reality Absolute which cannot afford to keep anything outside Its purview, for It cannot brook the least difference. It includes everything within It and remains transcending all-whether an object or concept, real or unreal, imaginable or unimaginable. It is

beyond all thoughts and words, which no philosophy could reveal directly. By grasping the significance of the Maha Vakya, one attains that which is beyond the import of the Vakya. When even a clear understanding and a firm conviction of this Truth bestow peace and satisfaction which surpass all understanding, what to say of those rare ones who have experienced and realised It! All differences among the different schools become futile being mere dialectics and verbal gymnastics, before such sages of realisation. Each school reveals only some partial truth and, therefore, all of them are true as far as they go.

इर्त शब्र्दर्शरस्क पर्दोक्तमर्तः,

र्वहता मनआर्र्दषु तैवरचनैः ।

न र्वधानर्महार्स्त तथा वचने,

सुर्वलक्षणमेतर्दतो वचनात्॥५६

Iti-sabda-siraskapadokta-matih

vihita mana-adishu tair-vachanaih,

Na vidhanam-ihasti tatha vachane

suvilakshanam-etad-ato vachanat.

मनसोर्वयतः सर्वतृप्रत्रेः,

प्रवर्दर्न्त न तार्न सर्दात्मकताम् ।

मन आर्र्द र्ह मुख्यमुपास्यतया,

प्रवर्दर्न्त यतोऽक्षरदृष्टयुतम् ॥ ५७ ॥

Manaso viyatah savitriprabhriteh

pravadanti na tani sadatmakatam,

Mana-adi hi mukhyam-upasyataya

pravadanti yatokshara-drishtiyutam.

Sri Totakacharya starts his arguments by saying that the Maha Vakyas instruct only identity of Tvam and Tat, and that the sentence 'mind should be meditated as Brahman' and similar other Vedic texts enjoining meditation and worship, are subsidiary to the Maha Vakyas. The use of the word 'Iti' after the word 'Brahman' in the above sentence, gives the meaning 'as Brahman'. In the Maha Vakya 'Tat-tvam-asi', the word 'Iti' is absent. This makes all the difference between the two sentences. In the sentence enjoining meditation, the word 'mind' does not also refer to Brahman's own nature. It is not used as an adjective qualifying the word 'Brahman'. The instruction conveyed by the sentence is very clear. It says that one should meditate on the mind superimposing on it the characteristics of Brahman such as all-pervasiveness, immortality, eternity, etc. It does not say that mind is Brahman. Nor does it say anything about the nature of Brahman. The Maha Vakyas on the other hand speak about the nature of Brahman-Atman identity.

करको न मृदः पृथगस्र्त यथा,

मनआर्द सतोऽस्र्त तथा न पृथक् ।

इर्त वस्तुसतत्वकता तु यर्दा,

र्वधशब्र्द इर्ति तर्दा तु वृथा ॥५८

Karako na mridah prithágasti yatha

mana-adi satosti tatha na prithak,

Iti vastu-satatvakata tu yada

vidhisabda itischa tada tu vritha.

It may be argued: "Just as a pot is not different from the earth of which it is an effect, so the mind as an effect is not different from

Brahman its cause; and hence the above Upasana sentence would indicate the identity of the mind with Brahman". If this argument is accepted, then the verb 'Upasita' (should meditate) and the word 'Iti' both would become meaningless. The Vedas would never use superfluous, much less, meaningless words in their texts. According to the accepted rules of interpretation of scriptural texts, such sentences do not concern about non-difference of the two entities such as mind and Brahman, but instruct about meditation superimposing Brahman on the mind.

मन आर्र्दसमानर्व्क्ततया,

र्वधशब्र्दमर्त च र्वहाय यर्र्द ।

जनकेन सता सहयोगर्मया

र्दनृतं तर्र्दतस्फिुमुक्तमतू॥५९

Mana-adi samana-vibhaktitaya

vidhi-sabdam-itim cha vihaya yadi,

Janakena sata saha yogam-iyad

anritam tad-iti-sphutam-uktam-abhut.

It may be said: "In the sentence 'Mano-brahma-iti upasita', the word 'Mana' has the same case-termination as the word 'Brahman' which is its cause. By eliminating the words 'Upasita' and 'Iti' the two words 'Mana' and 'Brahma' would become identical. The sentence would be 'Mano-brahma' meaning 'mind is Brahman'. It is similar to the Maha Vakyas "Tat-tvam-asi', 'Aham Brahma-asmi', etc. Hence, the latter also would enjoin Upasana like the former sentence". This argument also is baseless, for the very premise about the reality of the mind held by the Purva Pakshin would be undermined. While the mind is inert, Brahman is sentient-nay,

sentience itself-and therefore, there cannot be identity between the two.

ननु जीवसतोरर्प तत्त्वमर्त,
स्फ्रिमेकर्वक्र्त्य्धानर्मदम् ्।
कथमस्य शरीरत्ोऽनृतता,

न वे्दर्वक्त् र्व्क्तयुजः ॥ ६०॥

Nanu jiva-sator-api tattvam-iti
sphutam-eka-vibhaktyabhidhanam-idam,
Katham-asya sarirabhrito-nritata
na-bhaved-avibhakta-vibhaktiyujah.

प्रकृतेर्र्धानपर्देन यर्दा-
र्वकृतेर्र्धानमुपैर्त युजाम् ्।
अनृतत्वमर्तस्तु तर्दा र्वकृतौ,

मृर्दयं रि् इर्त्य्धासु यथा ॥ ६१

Prakriter-abhidhana-padena yada-
vikriter-abhidhanam-upaiti yujam,
Anritatva-matistu tada vikritau
mrid-ayam ghata ityabhidhasu yatha.

र्वकृर्तत्वमवार्र्दमनः प्रत्े-
बरह्मुशः श्रुर्तषु प्रकृतेस्तु सतः
अतएव समानर्व्क्तया,

मनआर्र्दसुवेद्यमसत्यर्मर्त॥ ६२

Vikrititvam-avadi-manah prabhriter-

bahusah srutishu prakritestu satah,

Ata eva samana-vibhaktitaya

mana-adi-suvedyam-asatyam-iti.

"In the sentence, 'Mano-brahma' where the two words 'Mana' and 'Brahma' have the same case-ending, it is stated in the previous paragraph that Mana or the mind would become unreal. Applying the same rule to the Maha Vakya Tat-tvam-asi', the two words 'Tat' and Tvam' have the same case-termination and therefore the Tvam' signifying the Jiva would also become unreal. How can the embodied Jiva identified with the non-dual Brahman, the only Reality, become unreal? When the Jiva becomes unreal, the statement of the Sruti that the Jiva is changeless, pure, consciousness, always free, would be contradicted". The reply to this objection is that only when in a sentence a word representing an effect is identified with another word signifying its cause and both the words have the same case-termination, the word signifying the effect has to be considered as unreal. In the sentence 'the pot is earth', pot is the effect of earth which is its cause and both the words have the same case-termination. Hence the pot being only a modification of earth, which is only a name based upon words, is declared unreal and earth alone is considered real. Again in the sentence 'the cloth is thread', the cloth is an effect of thread which is its cause. Both the words have the same case-ending. Therefore, the cloth is unreal and thread alone real. In the case of gold and ornaments made out of it, we say that the ornament is gold. Here also the ornament being an effect becomes unreal and the gold alone is real. This is the truth conveyed by the Sruti when it says: "O my dear, by the knowledge of a ball of clay, all articles made out of clay become known, for all modification is only name based upon words, and the clay alone is real" (Chh. Up. VI-1-iv). Based

on this principle, what is the position of the mind occurring in the sentence Mano-brahma-Mind is Brahman'. The Sruti has stated in several places that mind is born out of Brahman. The Mund. Up. (II-1-iii) declares: "From Him originate vital force as well as the mind, all the senses, space, air, fire, water and earth that supports everything". The Chh. Up. (VI-5-i) also proclaims the fact: "The food that is eaten becomes threefold, the grossest portion becomes faeces which is excreted, the middle portion is converted into flesh and the subtlest part becomes the mind". Several other Sruti and Smriti texts can be cited to show that the mind is an effect of Brahman which is its cause. Therefore, when the word 'mind' is placed in apposition with the word 'Brahman' and the two words have the same case-ending, the mind has to be considered as unreal and Brahman alone as real.

In contrast with this, the relationship between the two words "Tat' and 'Tvam' in the Maha Vakya, is not that of cause and effect though the two words have the same case-termination. Hence the Jiva signified by the term 'Tvam' cannot become unreal as it happens with the word 'mind' in the sentence on Upasana. Nowhere have the Vedas stated that the embodied Jiva is an effect or creation of Brahman. The wise have placed the Jiva on a different footing from that of the mind which being an effect of Brahman is subjected to birth and death. The same case-termination alone of the two words Tat' and 'Tvam' in the Maha Vakya, cannot make the Tvam unreal, as it is not an effect of Tat.

जर्नतत्वमवार्र्द नर्ह श्रुर्तर्-

जरनकेन सतास्य शरीरतूः ।

मन आर्र्दर्वकारर्वलक्षणतां,

प्रर्तयर्न्त शरीरतूस्तु ततः ॥६३

Janitatvam-avadi nahi srutibhir-
janakena satasya sarirabhritah,
Mana-adi vikara-vilakshanatam
pratiyanti sarirabhritastutatah.

यर्दजीजनर्दम्बरपूवꣳर्मर्दं
जगर्दक्षरमीक्षण र्वग्रहकम्।
प्रर्तवेश तर्देवे जगत्स्वꣳकृतं
स च जीवसमाख्य इर्त श्रुतयः ॥ ६४

Yad ajijanad-ambara-purvam-idam
jagad aksharam-ikshana-vigrahakam,
Pravivesa tadeva jagat-svakritam
sa cha jivasamakhya iti srutayah.

परमात्मर्वकारर्वक्त्मर्त्त
नरव्त्यत एव शरीरतूः ।
यतएव र्वकारर्व्न्नमर्त
व्त्यत एव मृषात्वमर्तः ।।६५

Paramatma-vikara-vibhakta-matir
na bhavatyata eva sarirabhritah,
Yata-eva vikara-vibhinna-matir
na bhavatyata eva mrishatva-matih.

If the Jiva is not an effect of Brahman, then what exactly is its nature? This is now answered. Through the willing of the Akshara Purusha, the Immortal Lord, the whole universe beginning with the

subtlest element ether, was projected. In that universe, in every object of it thus created, the Purusha entered, as it were, and it is He that is known as the Jiva. This is a fact well-known from the scriptures. The Sruti also proves it: "After creating by Its mere Sankalpa (will) all that exists, Brahman which is Truth-Consciousness-Infinity", says the Taittiriya Upani- shad (II-1 and 6), "entered into that very thing". The Consciousness with the limiting adjunct is called the Jiva. This Jiva is not a modification of Brahman, nor is it an effect of Brahman. It is Brahman itself wholly. Its nature is the same as Brahman's nature. Therefore, the Jiva is non-different from Brahman, and hence it cannot become unreal like the mind. The Jiva signified by the term 'Tvam' in the Maha Vakya, having been proved as not an effect of Brahman which is the connotation of the other word 'Tat' in the sentence, and the two words having the same case-termination placed in apposition in the sentence, establish non-difference alone, both being the same one, non-dual Sat-chit-ananda Brahman.

अर्वक्त् र्वक्त्र्यधानकृता,

परमात्मपर्देन शरीरतूः ।

न र्वे्र्दह तत्त्वमर्सप्रतौ,

लवणं जलर्मत्र्यधासु यथा ॥॥६६

Avibhakta-vibhaktyabhidhana-krita

paramatma-padena sarirabhritah,

Na bhaved-iha tattvamasi-prabhritau

lavanam jalam-iti-abhidhasu yatha.

परमात्मर्वकारर्नराकरणं,

कृतमस्य शरीरतूस्तुयतः ।

परमेश्वररूपर्वलक्षणता,

न मनागर्प र्देहतृोर्स्त ततः ॥६७

Paramatma-vikara-nirakaranam

kritam-asya sarirabhritastu yatah,

Paramesvararupa-vilakshanata

na managapi dehabhritosti tatah.

Another illustration is cited to confirm the above conclusion. 'Salt is sea-water'-in this sentence the two words 'salt' and 'sea-water' have the same case- termination and salt is an effect of sea-water its cause. Salt is a modification of sea-water and hence unreal, the sea-water alone being real.

When in a sentence two substantives having the same case-termination, denote one and the same thing, they are said to have what is known in Vedantic parlance as Samanadhikaranya, the same locus. The word 'Adhikarana' here means locus or denotation and the word 'Samana' means same or identical. Samanadhi-karanya relationship is said to be mainly of two varieties: primary or Mukhya-Samanadhikaranya, and secondary or Badha-Samanadhikaranya. In the primary case, the two words indicate one and the same reality as in the sentence 'the pot-ether is the sky-ether', where the ether inside the pot and in the sky is the same one identical ether. In the secondary one, though the two substantives have the same case-termination and they stand in the relation of identity, they do not imply one and the same thing. To illustrate, in the sentence 'the snake is a rope', the relation between the two words 'snake' and 'rope' is of course one of identity and they have the same case-termination. But a snake can never have identity with a rope. Here, the intended meaning of the sentence is what appeared as a snake is not really a snake but is a rope only. Hence,

the first notion of the snake gets sublated leaving only the rope. Snake becomes unreal and rope alone is real.

Now, in the Maha Vakya under discussion, the Samanadhikaranya that exists between the words "Tat' and "Tvam', is not the same as that we find in the sentence 'salt is sea-water'. The latter comes under Badha-Samanadhikaranya, and therefore, the 'salt', being unreal, is sublated leaving 'sea-water' alone, because the salt and seawater have the relationship of effect and cause. The Maha Vakya Tat-tvam-asi, which is similar to the sentence 'the pot-ether is sky-ether', comes under Mukhya-Samanadhikaranya. "Tat' and "Tvam' identical, both signifying the same one, non-dual pure Consciousness. The Jiva which is the same as Kutastha, the Atman, the changeless essence in the individual is therefore identical with Brahman, the non-dual essence of the universe.

If it is argued that the word "Tvam' in the Maha Vakya signifies the man entangled in the Samsara, as some would like to have it, then the sentence would come under the Badha-Samanadhikaranya and the word 'Tvam' gets sublated completely to leave 'Tat' alone, and identity is established on that basis. The Maha Vakya, therefore, cannot be said to enjoin Upasana like the sentence 'Mano-brahma-iti upasita'. The Upanishads do prescribe a number of Upasanas or Vidyas as they are called. The Chhandogya Upanishad makes mention of Satya Vidya, Dahara Vidya, Vaisvanara Vidya, Udgitha Vidya, Sandilya Vidya, Purusha Vidya, Samvarga Vidya, Madhu Vidya, Upakosala Vidya, Sadvidya, Bhuma Vidya, etc. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad refers to the Akshara Vidya, Paryanka Vidya, Panchagni Vidya, Satya Vidya, etc. We come across the Shodasa Kala Vidya in the Prasna Upanishad. There are several other Vidyas also. In all these Vidyas, the seekers are instructed to practise Upasana-meditation and worship-according to certain specified methods, which are helpful to make the extroverted mind turn inward towards the Atman. Some of these Vidyas come under

Nirguna meditation. The wise are of the view that some of them lead to Krama Mukti or gradual liberation, some lead to Sadyo-Mukti or instantaneous liberation, and a few will bring about either Krama Mukti or Sadyo-Mukti according to the nature of meditation practised. It is the opinion of the wise that all Upasana would prepare the mind of the practitioner for the final reception of the Knowledge Supreme, by freeing it (the mind) from all impurities in the form of Vrittis or modifications caused by Vikshepa (Tula Ajnana) and the Mahavakya finally, in some mysterious, inexplicable manner, causes the dawn of Perfect Knowledge, Atman-Brahman identity in that purified mind by removing the root-nescience (Mula Ajnana). Sri Totakacharya says that one should therefore never entertain the least trace of any feeling of separation of oneself from Brahman.

ननु जीवसतोरणुमात्रमपि

स्वगतं न विशेषणमस्ति यदा।

वद तत्त्वमसीति तदा वचनं

किमु वक्ति तथैषत इत्यपि च ॥ ६८

Nanu jivasator-anumatram-api

svagatam na viseshanam-asti yada,

Vada tattvamasiti tada vachanam

kimu vakti tathaishata ityapi cha.

Vedanta establishes beyond doubt, the fact that there is not the least distinction between the individual Jiva and the Supreme Brahman and that both are identical, being the same non-dual Consciousness in essence. If this is an established fact why do the Upanishads declare their identity through the Mahavakyas Tat-tvam-asi, Aham

Brahmasmi, etc., and repeat it a number of times? The Antaryami Brahmana of the Br. Up. (III-7) states again and again that the Atman is the Immortal, Inner Ruler. Several other Upanishads also declare the identity of Jiva and Brahman through similar Mahavakyas. Is there redundancy in such statements of the Upanishads?

स्वगतं यर्द् ◌ेर्दकूर्मष्टमू

र्दणुमात्रमपीश्वरर्देहेतूोः ।

अपनेतुमशक्यमर्दोवचनै

रमुनास्य पृथक्त्वर्नषेधपरै: ॥ ६९

Svagatam yadi bhedakam-ishtam abhud-

anumatram-apisvara-deha-bhritoh,

Apanetum-asakyam-ado vachanair-

amunasya prithaktva-nishedha-paraih.

इह यस्य च यो गुण आत्मगतः,

स्वत एव न जातु वे्त्परतः ।

वचनेन न तस्य र्नराकरणं,

रि्यते स गुणः सहजस्तु यत॥ ॥ ७०

Iha yasya cha yo guna atmagatah

svata eva na jatu bhavet paratah,

Vachanena na tasya nirakaranam

kriyate sagunah sahajastu yatah.

वचनं त्ववबोधकमेव यतः,

ततएव न वस्तुर्वपयरयकृत् ◌्।

न र्ह वस्त्वर्प शब्रदवशात्प्रकृर्त,

प्रजहात्यनवर्स्थर्तर्दोषय्ात् ◌ॅ॥ ७१

Vachanam tvavabodhakam-eva yatah

tata-eva na vastu viparyayakrit,

Na hi vastvapi sabdavasat prakritim

prajahatyanavasthiti-dosha-bhayat.

यत एवमतो र्वषयस्य गुणं,

र्वषयेण सहात्मर्न मूढर्धया ।

अर्धरोर्पतमर्स्ववरूमगुणं,

प्रर्तषेधर्त तत्त्वमसीर्त वचः ॥ ७२

Yata evam-ato vishayasya gunam

vishayena sahatmani mudhadhiya,

Adhiropitam-apsviva bhumigunam

pratishedhati tattvamasiti vachah.

अतएव न दृष्टर्वधानपरं,

गुणवार्दपरं च न तिचनम् ◌्।

स्तुर्तवाद्यर्प नैतरुदुपास्यतया,

र्वर्धरत्र न र्देहतूोर्स्त यतः ॥७३

Ataeva na drishti-vidhana-param

gunavada-param cha na tadvachanam,

Stutivadyapi naitad-upasyataya

vidhir-atra na dehabhritosti yatah.

The non-difference between the Jiva and Brahman is the final Truth experienced by sages and saints. It is the culmination of knowledge wherein the final consummation of the Purusha and Prakriti is achieved. During the empirical existence of the seeker who has not reached that ultimate stage, but who is practising Sravana and Manana there is the feeling of difference. This feeling of differentiation he has to do away with. The instructions of the Sruti on the identity of Jiva and Brahman are addressed to qualified seekers after liberation. They are intended neither for the Wise nor for the completely ignorant non-seeker. If there is any real difference between the Jiva and Brahman, who can undo it and establish their identity? None; not even the Sruti will be able to effect it. The difference that appears to exist between the Jiva and Brahman is only an imagination of the unreal mind, and the Sruti, through the removal of this false distinction, instructs their non-difference.

In this world, nothing can deprive an object of its own nature inherent in it. Any number of Vedic texts cannot, therefore, destroy the real nature of an object, because the destruction of the nature of an object would annihilate the very object itself. For example, take the case of fire with its nature of heat and light. A permanent separation of heat and light from fire is impossible, for their separation, if effected by some means, would result in the destruction of fire itself. Therefore, all the valid proofs (Pramanas) such as direct perception, inference, comparison, verbal testimony which includes Vedas, presumption and non-apprehension (Pratyaksha, Anumana, Upamana, Sabda, Arthapatti and Anupalabdhi) will not succeed in this matter. The nature of an object is born with the object and dies with the object alone. Qualities newly brought in such as, say, heat in water, can however be easily removed, the quality of heat being not natural to water.

The Mahavakyas declaring the identity between the Jiva and Brahman, only remind the aspirant about an already existing fact which he has forgotten due to primeval nescience. This identity is his own inherent nature, and hence none can deprive him of it. The Mahavakyas cannot bring about any change in the nature of any object, least of all, the changeless Absolute. If such a change were possible it would result in a chaos. If words alone could be able to effect changes in the nature of objects, the sun would, for the mere saying, lose its nature of heat and light; the cold ice would begin emitting heat like a blazing fire, and so on, resulting in utter confusion in our empirical world. The conclusion of the wise is, therefore, that the Mahavakyas do serve a useful purpose by refuting and nullifying the imaginary difference between the Jiva and Brahman brought about by an unreal nescience. If the difference were real and if it would form part of the nature of Atman-Brahman, a thousand Mahavakyas would not be able to do away with it.

Another analogy is cited to illustrate this truth. Water by its own nature is colourless and odourless, but when it comes in contact with mud and dirt, it appears to be coloured and bad-smelling. Due to want of proper discrimination, people superimpose the characteristics of colour and smell which really belong to the mud and dirt, on the pure, colourless, odourless water and say that the water is muddy and bad-smelling. Similar is the case with the Atman. The name and form which are the attributes of the not-Atman such as the intellect, mind and their Vrittis or modifications are superimposed on the pure, nameless, formless non-dual Atman due to nescience. These unreal superimposed names and forms are eliminated through the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads. When the superimposition is thus removed, the ever-free, eternal non-dual Atman-Brahman shines by its own nature.

Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj says: "The superimposition of the ego on the eternally free Self and transferring the ego's actions and experiences to the actionless Self, is akin to a father's superimposing of his son's distress upon himself (the father), whereas, in truth, he (the father) has none. While stating 'Neti, Neti', the scriptures do negate the superimposition as if that superimposition were a reality. Injunctions, reiteration, etc., are all due to that superimposition. While the superimposition which has no real existence by itself, is negated, how can injunctions, reiteration, etc., be sustained? Are they not also negated along with the superimposition? So talking of injunctions when they are negated, is not reasonable. The negation of the ego from the Self is like the de-superimposition of the superimposed colour from the sky by ignorant people. This negation is not of a real thing. If real things were to be negated, (and liberation were to ensue out of it) then surely liberation would become transitory. A certain amount of reiteration and reasoning is necessary to grasp the truth contained in the Sruti passages like Tat-tvam-asi and to get firmly convinced of the same to the point of experience. But they cannot be construed, to be injunctions on the lines of the Vedic ones (in the Karma Kanda of the Vedas). They help us to deny perceptional knowledge that is more powerful than inferential knowledge, and to strengthen our faith in the inferential knowledge. They help us to negate ignorance, but, they do not directly and positively present us with Self-knowledge as a result of their being put to us as a means. The Self is Svayam-Prakasa (Self-Effulgence). It shines by its own light. It is known by Its own Self. In the strict sense, there exists no means to realise the Self. To a coward who doubts whether he exists or not, what means can one suggest so that his (the coward's) existence can be 'attained' by him (the coward)!"

For the reasons explained above, we arrive at the conclusion that the Mahavakyas cannot be said to enjoin Upasana like the sentence 'Mind should be meditated upon as Brahman'; nor do they specify the characteristics of the Atman, like the sentence 'He is a lion' wherein the quality of bravery is attributed to a man; nor are they of an eulogical nature like the sentence 'He is Indra'.

सत एव र्ह नाम जगत्प्रकृते-

रुपधानवशार्र्दह जीव इर्त ।

अतएव न जीवसतत्वकतां,

प्रकृतस्य सतः प्रर्तपार्दयर्त॥ ७४

Sata eva hi nama jagatprakriter-

upadhanavasadiha jiva iti,

Ataeva na jivasatatvakatam

prakritasya satah pratipadayati.

यर्र्द जीवसतत्वकतां गमये-

र्दर्णमार्र्दगुणस्य जगत्प्रकृतेः ।

अर्णमार्र्दगुणोर्क्तरतोऽस्यमृषा,

यर्र्द वास्य शरीरर्द्भृत्मकता॥ ७५

Yadi jivasatatvakatam gamayed-

animadigunasya jagatprakriteh,

Animadigunoktir-atosya mrisha

yadi vasya sarirabhridatmakata.

न च संसृर्तहेतुर्नराकरणं,

कृतमस्य शरीरतो ऽमतम् ।

परमेश्वरमात्मतया ब्रुवता,

वचनेन च तत्त्वमसीत्यमुना ॥ ७६

Na cha samsriti-hetu-nirakaranam
kritam-asya sarirabhritobhimatam,
Paramesvaram-atmataya bruvata
vachanena cha tattvamasityamuna.

त्वमसीर्त पर्दियमेर्त युजुां,

तर्दर्त ध्वर्नना सह तत्त्वर्मर्त ।

र्ियया सह नामपर्दं सर्मया

न्नरपेक्ष्यमुपैत्यनया र्ह युजुाम् ॥७७

Tvamasiti padadvayametiyujam,
Taditi dhvanina saha tattvamiti,
Kriyaya saha namapadam samiyan-
nirapekshyam-upaityanaya hi yujam.

न र्ह नामसहस्रमर्प र्ियया,

रर्हतं र्कमर्प प्रर्तपार्दयर्त ।

प्रर्तपार्दकमेषु र्लङार्द्द वे्

र्ि्हतार्द्दमतेजरनकं र्ह यता ॥ ७८

Na hi namasahasram-apikriyaya-
rahitam kimapi pratipadayati,
Pratipadakam-eshu lingadi bhaved-

vihitadimater-janakam hi yatah.

ग्वानर्प मध्यममेव यत़ो

र्वर्नयच्छर्त युषुमर्र्द र्नत्यमतः ।

प्रथमं त्वमसीर्त पते स्मर्त

रिमं त्वर्सना सर्मयात्तर्र्दर्त ।। ७९ ।।

Bhagavan-api madhyamam-eva yato
viniyachhati yushmadi nityam-atah,
Prathamam tvamasiti pade samitas-
charamam tvasina samiyat-taditi.

पुरुषोर्र्हतस्त्वमसीर्त यर्दा,

र्कमसार्न वर्देर्त तर्दा्मिुः ।

श्रवणाय वेर्दर्णमार्र्दगुणं,

सर्र्दर्त प्रकृतं तर्दसीर्त वर्देर्ते् ॥ ८० ॥

Purushobhihitas-tvamasiti yada
kimasani vadeti tadabhimukhah,
Sravanaya bhaved-animadi gunam
saditi prakritam tadasiti vadet.

त्वमर्स ध्वर्नर्नार्र्हतस्य यतः,

तर्र्दर्त श्रुर्तवाच्यसर्दात्मकताम् ।

अवर्दिचनं तत एव सतो,

नर्ह जीवसतत्वकतां वर्दर्त ॥ ८१ ॥

Tvamasi dhvaninabhihitasya yatah

taditi srutivachya-sadatmakatam,

Avadad-vachanam tata eva sator

na hi jivasatatvakatam vadati.

Another doubt may rise as to why we should not understand the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi to mean: 'Brahman is Jiva', as against the accepted meaning that Jiva is Brahman. Sri Totakacharya says that, according to Vedantic texts, the Karana Brahman, Brahman as the Vivarta Upadana Karana, i.e., the unreal, material cause of this phenomenal universe, gets the appellation of 'Jiva' due to the limiting adjunct of the three bodies-the gross, subtle and causal. Hence, in this context, there is no justification to attribute Jivahood to Brahman which is pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. Further, in ascertaining the meaning of a sentence, the context in which it occurs has great relevance. Here, that Section of the Chhandogya Upanishad in which this Mahavakya appears, deals with the non-duality of the transcendental Brahman declared in the Mantra: "My dear, in the beginning (i.e., before creation of the universe) there was only pure Existence, one only, without a second" (VI-2-ii).

Further, another text (8-vii) in the same Section of that Upanishad says: "That subtler than the subtlest is the Atman of all this, that is True, That is the Atman, That Thou Art". This statement of the Sruti would be falsified if we were to attribute Jivahood to Brahman. For, Jiva being gross, unreal and limited, these qualities would perforce have to be attributed to Brahman which is non-dual, infinite and real. Therefore, if this sacred Vedic sentence, the holy of all holies, is not to be falsified, the argument now brought in attributing gross, limited Jivahood to the most subtle, infinite non-dual Brahman, has to be rejected.

The goal of this embodied Jiva is liberation from the cycle of metempsychoses. If Jivahood were to be attributed to Brahman,

this goal would become impossible of achievement for the reason that Brahman, the ever-free and unlimited, would become bound and limited like the Jiva. Thus acceptance of the topsy-turvy meaning for the Mahavakya would lead us to the ridiculous position of dragging down the ever-free, non-dual Reality, to eternal bondage and all kinds of limitations.

An examination of the grammatical construction of the Mahavakya would be helpful to arrive at its correct meaning. Of the three words 'Tat', 'Tvam' and 'Asi'; constituting the sentence, what get connected first are the two words 'Tvam' and 'Asi', says the Acharya. We get 'Tvam-asi' meaning 'You are'. Thereafter, with this combination of the two words, the third word 'Tat' is connected to get the whole sentence 'Tat-tvam-asi'. Whenever a noun is connected with a verb, a sentence comes into being without the necessity of any further element. The verb 'asi' meaning 'are', combined with the subject 'tvam' meaning 'You', and supplemented by the word 'tat' meaning 'That', does give the correct meaning of the sentence 'Tat-tvam-asi', namely Jiva is Brahman'. Leaving off this reasonable interpretation and going in for a contrary one is not justifiable.

Any number of nouns, a hundred or a thousand, without a verb will make no sense. Some verbs are of injunctive nature and some are of the nature of prohibition. Others signify a state of existing facts which neither enjoin nor prohibit any action. This is the view of the learned. The great Sage Panini, the celebrated Sanskrit Grammarian, in his aphorisms on the subject, has laid down that only the second person verb 'asi' (are) should be conjoined with the pronoun 'tvam' (You). Hence, in the Mahavakya, the verb 'asi' should be first connected with the subject 'tvam' to get the first portion of the sentence "tvam-asi' (You are). Thereafter, the word 'tat' must be brought in and conjoined with that portion to make the whole sentence. The meaning of the sentence would therefore be

'You are That'. It cannot be That are You' or 'Brahman are Jiva', for it would be wrong grammar. If the subject of the sentence were to be 'tat signifying Brahman, the rules of grammar have laid down that the proper verb to be used is 'asti' and not 'asi'. In as much as the Mahavakya has the verb 'asi', the subject can only be 'tvam' and not 'tat'.

The Acharya further explains how the Mahavakya gets its accepted meaning. A disciple possessed of the fourfold qualifications approaching the preceptor entreats the latter for initiation into the Supreme Truth. To such a disciple the preceptor first says Tvam asi' (You are), and the disciple understands: 'Aham asmi' (I am). This naturally arouses in him, the question 'Who am I?' When the preceptor finds that the disciple is ready to receive the final initiation, he instructs him: Tat-tvam-asi' (You are That), meaning You are Brahman. This is the proper and logical connection of the words in the Mahavakya.

Sri Sankarananda Sarasvati in his Atma-Purana says that the two words 'Brahman' and 'Atman' etymologically connote the same meaning, that they are synonyms and that they have 'Brihati' and 'Ati' respectively as their roots. 'Brihati' means great and all-pervasive. 'Ati' means innermost and all-pervasive. All-pervasiveness is common in both the root-words. Transcendence of everything conceivable and inconceivable predominates in the meaning of the root 'Brihati'. That which transcends all must evidently be non-different from the all. This condition can be satisfied only by that which is not limited either by space, time or object. Thus, the word 'Brahman' derives the meaning as That which exists and pervades transcending all limitations. The root-word 'Ati' means that which exists as non-different in all the gross and subtle objects, at all times, in all places. The word 'Atman' derived from this root, therefore, signifies that which remains as one with everything in all the three periods of time and beyond.

Thus the idea of that which pervades without being limited by space, time and object, is present in both the words 'Brahman' and 'Atman' and, therefore, they are identical in their connotations. Hence the words 'Tat' and 'Tvam' which signify Brahman and Atman, through their implied meanings also, establish their identity-says the Author of the Atma-Purana.

In the Mahavakya 'Tat-tvam-asi' the word 'tvam' signifies its indicative meaning which is the innermost, immediate Atman, the pure Consciousness freed of all limitations including individuality. This is identified with the indicative meaning of the word 'tat' viz., Brahman, the one, non-dual Consciousness freed of all vestures like mediacy, infinitude, etc. The sentence cannot therefore mean that Brahman has the characteristics of Jivahood.

If the identity of the Jiva and Brahman is an established fact why the Jiva does not experience its real immortal, infinite and blissful nature? The reply is:

वषर्या्मिुार्न शरीरतू:,

स्वरसेन सर्दा करणार्न यत: ।

स्वकमेष न रूपमवैर्त तत:,

प्रर्तबोध्यत एव ततो वचनै: ॥८२

Vishayabhimukhani sarirabhritah

svarasena sada karanani yatah,

Svakam-esha na rupam-avaiti tatah

pratibodhyata eva tato vachanaih.

वचनं च परार्चपुर:सरकं,

बहुवैर्र्दकमत्र तथास्मरणम्।

वषयेषु च नावर्मर्या्स यत्,

मनसेन्द्रिय रश्मिवन्निग्रहवत्त्वात् ३॥

Vachanam cha paranchi purahsarakam

bahuvaidikam-atra tathasmaranam,

Vishayeshu cha navam-ivambhasi yat

manasendriya rasmi vinigrahavat.

The Jiva does not experience its real innermost essence, since the sense-organs are extroverted and directed towards their respective objects. Hence it is that the compassionate Sruti instructs the Jiva on its own real nature through the Mahavakya. For, none other than the Sruti is capable of giving this supreme instruction. A duly qualified aspirant who has discriminated the Self and the non-Self and has undergone the threefold practice of Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana, becomes established in his real nature by hearing the Mahavakya. The Kathopanishad says that the self-existent Lord created the senses and made them extroverted and therefore, one sees the exterior objects and not the Self, within. It is only a very rare, discriminating person desiring for immortality, who turns his eyes away from the outside objects and then sees the indwelling Self. The Bhagavad-Gita also proclaims this fact: "The mind which follows in the wake of the wandering senses carries away one's discrimination, even as the wind carries away a boat in the ocean" (II-67), "Little by little abandoning without reserve all desires born of thought and imagination and completely restraining the whole group of the senses by the mind from all sides, attaining a state of quiescence by holding the intellect firmly and by establishing the mind on the Self, let the seeker not think of anything else" (VI-24 and 25). These go to prove that although the Jiva is really Brahman in essence and there is no difference between the two, due to the outgoing nature of the senses and the mind, the Jiva is not able to experience its real nature of Brahmanhood and it has therefore

become necessary to the Sruti to instruct the fact through the Mahavakya.

इयता र्ह न र्देहतृोर्स्त्र्द्रा,
परमात्मदृशेररर्त वाच्यमर्दम् ॅ।
स्थर्तकाल इहार्प च सृष्टमिु,
सर्दनन्यतया श्रुत एष यतः ॥ ८४ ॥

lyata hi na dehabhritosti bhida
paramatmadriser-iti vachyam-idam,
Sthitikala ihapi cha srishtimukhe
sadananyataya sruta esha yatah.

यिमप्यर्वरोर्ध शरीरतृो,
वचनीयमर्दं ं रघुन न्र्दनवत् ॅ ।
उपर्देशमपेक्ष्य सर्दात्ममर्तः,
परमात्मसतत्त्वकता च सर्दा।।। ८५

Dvayam-apyavirodhi sarirabhrito
vachaniyam-idam raghunandanavat,
Upadesam-apekshya sadatmamatih
paramatmasatattvakata cha sada..

The Jiva is not different from Brahman. During all the three periods of time, exists non-difference only between the Jiva and Brahman. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad reveals this truth when it says: "Brahmaiva san-brahmapyeti-remaining as Brahman all the while, the knower of Brahman attains Brahman" (IV-4-vi). The Kathopanishad makes a similar declaration in the Mantra II-2-1: "Vimuktascha Vimuchyate-He who is by his inherent nature

already liberated, becomes as if liberated being freed from the superimposed unreal bondage". Again, the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in its Madhu Kanda and Yajnavalkya Kanda containing the most sublime instructions on the Supreme Reality, imparted by Sage Yajnavalkya to his wife Maitreyi, expounds through beautiful illustrations how Brahman remains non-dual before creation and after dissolution of this phenomenal universe and also during its existence. Therefore, there is no reason to entertain the least idea of differentiation between the individual Jiva and the non-dual Brahman. The qualified disciple who is instructed through this Mahavakya by his Master who is a knower of the Vedas and himself established in Brahman, remains essentially as Brahman even before instruction, at the time of instruction, and after the instruction.

There is neither any contradiction nor redundancy in the instruction of the Sruti contained in the Mahavakya in regard to the Atman-Brahman identity. This is illustrated by Sage Valmiki through an incident depicted in his immortal epic Ramayana. Sri Rama is really Lord Vishnu himself. But he was considering himself as an ordinary human being because of his embodiment as the son of emperor Dasaratha. After the war with Ravana, the king of Lanka, Sita is brought to the presence of Rama who addresses her in very harsh terms questioning her chastity. Sita explains her innocence and purity, but unable to bear the heart-rending words of her husband and in order to prove her purity to the whole world, she enters into the fire. All the gods including Brahma, the creator appear on the scene. Brahma addressing Sri Rama says: "O Rama, you are Lord Narayana himself, the glorious God who wields the discus; you are the divine Boar with a single tusk, the conqueror of your past and future enemies; you are the imperishable Brahman, the Absolute, the Truth abiding in the beginning, middle as well as at the end of the universe; O scion of Raghu, you are the supreme

Law operating in all the universe; your forces are spread all around; you are the Lord Hari with the four arms" (VI-117-verses 13 and 14). These two verses and the succeeding ones till the end of the Section, form as it were an exposition of the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi. Sri Rama is reminded of his essential nature of Brahman which he really is at all times. Due to the limiting adjunct of this body one is called by the name of Jiva which appears to be different and separated from the non-dual Brahman and subjected to transmigration. The Mahavakya of the Upanishad removes this illusion of separateness and the seeker realises his own real nature which is nothing but the ever-revealed Reality.

A RETROSPECT

That all experiences whether pleasurable or painful are caused through contact of the sense-organs and the mind with the objects outside is a well-known fact. The sense-organs and the mind are contained in the body. What is the cause of this body? Here, we have to get the help of the scriptures which say that Karmas, desires, likes and dislikes, perception of duality, and Ajnana or primeval nescience form the causal chain, each succeeding one forming the cause of the preceding ones. Thus, the ultimate cause of this Samsara or worldly existence is traced to Ajnana. This Ajnana is not mere absence of knowledge. It is not negative but positive in nature, being an error in perception, a wrong understanding taking the non-eternal to be eternal, the impure to be pure, the evil to be good and the non-Atman to be the Atman. The only means to do away with any mistaken understanding is to know the correct position.

Hence Knowledge is said to be the primary and immediate cause of breaking this causal chain and attaining the Supreme Goal of life. This Supreme knowledge can be had only after a very strenuous course of discipline and spiritual practice the most important of which is Upasana or worship combined with

meditation. Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana prescribed in the Upanishads and similar scriptures will bear fruit only when one has passed through successfully the preliminary practice of Upasana. This is the considered view of those who have trodden the path. The final hearing of the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads from one's spiritual preceptor comes as the last stage which opens, as it were, the gate to the realms of the Infinite. One who wakes up from a dream through seeing a dream-tiger fully realises that all one's experiences in the dream which then appeared as real as those of the waking state, are unreal, nay, they did not exist at all, that the whole dream-world was a false imagination or modification of the mind alone, and that the dreamer alone existed at the time of dreaming and everything that appeared in the dream was He alone. Likewise the sage, who has woken up from this 'waking-dream' that all of us now experience, through the practice of Sadhana culminating in the hearing of the Mahavakyas, has completely a new experience (if we can use this term for want of better term, for it is not the experience with the triad of the experiencer, the experienced and the experience) wherein he finds that He alone exists and the whole world is He alone, that there was neither any bondage nor liberation-so say the scriptures. Therefore, the Truth is that everything here is the manifestation of that One Supreme Consciousness. It is this Truth that remains ever-revealed in and through every object that we experience, the act of experience, as also the subject or the experiencer.

The Mahavakyas therefore are expressive of the oneness and the non-dual nature of Consciousness, and they as such do not involve any Karma or Upasana. This fact has been established by the Author in the preceding section through a number of arguments. In the Nyaya Sastra (scripture on Logic) among the many popular maxims, there is what is known as the Simhavalokana Nyaya (the maxim of the lion's backward glance). Just as a lion while moving

forward after killing its prey, stops for a moment and bending its neck, casts a look on the dead animal to make sure that it is completely dead, the author now casts a retrospective look at what he has already established. Although all possible objections that might arise have been anticipated and cleared, he takes up the subject once again and on the basis of a set of fresh grounds, confirms the Vedantic position that the Mahavakya 'Tat-tvam-asi' instructs the qualified disciple on the non-duality of the ultimate Truth and that the sentence does not involve Upasana or meditation. He says that the view that the Mahavakya instructs meditation and therefore does not impart the instruction on the identity of Jiva with Brahman is not the true one:

सदुपासनमस्य विधेयतया

वचनस्य मम प्रतीति यतः।

अतएव न जीवसदात्मकतां

प्रतिबोधयतीत्यवदत्तदसत्॥८६

Sadupasanam-asya vidheyataya

vachanasya mama pratibhati yatah,

Ataeva na jivasadatmakatam

pratibodhayatityavadat-tad-asat.

सदुपास्व इति श्रुतिरत्र न ते

तदसत्वमिति श्रुतिरेवमयम्।

यत एवमतो न विधित्सितता

सदुपासनकमरण इत्यमृषा ॥ ८७

Sadupasva iti srutir-atra na te

tadasitvam-iti srutir-evam-iyam,

Yata evam-ato na vidhitsitata

sadupasana-karmana ityamrisha.

He further says that the Mahavakya 'Tat-tvam-asi' does not contain words such as 'Iti' and 'Upasita' as in the sentence 'Mano brahma iti upasita - one should meditate on the mind as Brahman' which is of the nature of an injunction (Vidhi Vakya). The Mahavakya cannot therefore come under Vidhi Vakyas. It merely states what actually is the position of the Jiva. It says: 'You are Brahman'. The Upanishads do not countenance involvement of any kind of Karma including Upasana at this last stage of one's march to the goal. The final hearing of the Mahavakya from the preceptor, by the disciple who has already traversed through the long and strenuous path and reached the last rung of the spiritual ladder, effects the consummation of the Jiva with Brahman. That all arguments which counter this Vedantic view will only fall flat is the considered view of Sri Totakacharya.

यर्द् तस्य कुतर्ि्र्दहानयनं,

र्ियते तर्दनथरकमेव वे्त् ॒।

पुरुषेण कृतस्य यतः श्रुर्तता,

न वे्र्दर्त वेर्दवर्दां स्मरणम् ॥॒॥८८

Yadi tasya kutaschid-ihanayanam

kriyate tad-anarthakam-eva bhavet,

Purushena krítasya yatah srutita

na bhaved-iti vedavidam smaranam.

If by hook or by crook, a verb signifying an injunction such as 'meditate' were to be introduced, it would create many difficulties.

For, any word newly introduced by human agency in a Vedic sentence which is superhuman in nature, would never fit in the context, as it could never possess the divinity which characterises the other words in such sentences. This is the declaration of the wise.

र्कमरे पुरुषं प्रर्तबोधर्यतुं ं
स्वकमथरमशक्तर्मदं ंवचनम् ्।
यर्दतोन्यत आनयनं र्ियते,
व्ता श्रवणेन र्वनार्प र्वधेः ।। ८९

Kim-are purusham pratibodhayitum
svakam-artham-asaktam-idam vachanam,
Yad-atonyata anayanam kriyate
bhavata sravanena vinapi vidheh.

श्रुतहार्नररहाश्रुतुक्लृप्तिरर्प,
श्रुर्तर्वत्समयो न वे्तुतुयतः ।
श्रुर्त्तक्तमता श्रुरुतवक्त्रगतं,
ग्रहणीयमतो न तु बुर्द्धवशात्म् ्॥ ९०

Srutahanir-ihasrutakliptir-api
srutivitsamayo na bhavet-tu-yatah,
Srutibhaktimata srutivakragatam
grahaniyam-ato na tu buddhivasat.

Further, the interpretation of the Mahavakya as instructing meditation, will serve no useful purpose to a qualified aspirant. It will not be capable of imparting the final saving Knowledge which comes only from the implied meaning of the Sentence accepted by

the Upanishads and the Sages. The introduction of an injunctive verb in the Mahavakya is unheard of by any one. Thrusting in of a verb enjoining meditation in the sentence would result in a completely contrary meaning and would deprive the sentence of its real import intended by the Sruti. The wise knowers and the pastmasters in the Advaita Vedanta who have realised the Reality do not accept any alternative meaning for the Mahavakya. Those who have faith in the Srutis should accept only the real implied meaning of the Vakya and should refrain from entertaining any false ideas that may arise in their impure intellect. The real import of the sentence which is the non-dual Atman-Brahman is capable of nullifying all other imaginary meanings that may be brought in by perverted intellects, for it eliminates the whole universe conceived as separate from the ultimate Truth.

पुरुषस्य शरीरगतात्ममर्त,

मृर् तसम्व्हेतुम नथरकरीम् ◌ ।

अपनीय सर्दात्ममर्तं र्दधती,

महतो पुरुषस्य र्हताय वे्त् ॥◌॥ ९१

Purushasya sariragatatmamatim

mritisambhavahetum-anarthakarim,

Apaniya sadatmamatim dadhati

mahate purushasya hitaya bhavet.

र्वर्नवत्तरत एव शरीरगता,

र्वपरीतमर्तः पुरुषस्य तर्दा ।

वचनेन तु तत्त्वमसीर्त यर्दा,

प्रर्तबोध्यत एष त इत्यर्प चा॥ ९२

Vinivartata eva sariragata

viparitamatih purushasya tada,

Vachanena tu tattvamasiti yada

pratibodhyata esha ta ityapi cha.

One considers one's body as oneself through wrong identification of the Atman with it. This is the sole cause of all pain and misery including birth and death. The only means to destroy this erroneous feeling of 'I am the body' is understanding the true nature of oneself through the mental Vritti 'I am Brahman' which is brought about in a qualified aspirant through the instruction of the Mahavakya 'Tat-tvam-asi'. This is the Jiva's greatest good, the supreme acme of human life. The Mahavakya which is certainly free of all action of the nature of injunction and prohibition, is the only means of attaining it. When the superimposition in the form of the mistaken identification of oneself with the body is removed, the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads, such as 'Tat-tvam-asi', 'Aham Brahmasmi', 'Prajnanam Brahma', 'Ayam Atma Brahma', "This is the inner ruler, your own immortal Atman', 'All this is verily Brahman', etc., effect the identification of the Atman with the non-dual Brahman. The erroneous idea which had taken hold of the mind due to delusion born out of nescience, is removed only by this means and not by any other. There is, therefore, no need to introduce any new verb in the Mahavakya to bring out an altogether different meaning.

यर्द् नापनयेच्रर्तरात्ममर्तं,

पुरुषस्य शरीरगतामनृताम् ◌्।

तुर्द हंम र्तंहेतुक कमरगर्तं,◌ं

सिुरुदुःफिलामवशोऽनुवे्त् ◌ॅ॥ ९३

Yadi napanayechhrutir-atmamatim

purushasya sariragatam-anritam,

Tad-ahammati-hetuka-karma-gatim

sukha-duhkha-phalam-avasonubhavet.

What would happen, if the seeker after Liberation rejects the real import of the Mahavakya? The author says that the wrong conception of 'I am the body' would cling to an aspirant who is reluctant to accept the advice of the scriptures and fails to grasp the implied meaning of 'Tat-tvam-asi'. As long as this error is not destroyed through the knowledge 'I am Brahman', so long he would continue to undergo helplessly all pain and misery arising out of the Karmas done through his mind, speech and body. The beginningless nescience has brought this great delusion as a result of which the feelings of 'T' and 'mine' have arisen. They are followed by actions-good, bad and mixed. These in their turn cause birth in different wombs ranging from Brahma, the Creator, down to the inanimate objects with all its concomitant effects of pleasure and pain. This endless chain would continue without break. Therefore, the wise seeker should never reject the implied meaning of the Mahavakya.

यर्द् तत्त्वमसीर्त वर्दिचनं,

सरुदुपासनकमर न तत्त्वर्मर्त ।

पुरुषस्य फलं सरुदुपासनतो,

र्वमृशार्म्ष्यर्त कीदृर्गर्त ॥ ९४

Yadi tattvamasiti vaded-vachanam

sadupasana-karma na tattvam-iti,

Purushasya phalam sadupasanato

vimrisami bhavishyati kidrig-iti.

पुरुषस्य तु मत्यरगुणस्य वे्त्,

सरुदुपासनया न सर्दात्मकता ।

न कथंचर्दर्प प्रजहार्त यतः,

प्रकृर्तं सहजार्महं करि्र्दर्प ॥ १५

Purushasya tu martyagunasya bhavet

sadupasanaya ra sadatmakata,

Na kathamchid-api prajahati yatah

prakritim sahajam-iha kaschid-api.

Now, for argument's sake, if one accepts that the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi' does not instruct Atman- Brahman oneness, but enjoins the aspirants to do Upasana, what results would accrue from that Upasana? The answer is: Man in his present condition is subject to birth, death and experience of pleasure and pain. This is his very nature inherent in him. As already stated, one's own nature cannot be destroyed by any means without detriment to oneself. So, none can do away with this inherent nature in the form of transmigration and the sufferings resulting out of it. Meditation and worship also cannot alter the position and Liberation would, therefore, become impossible of attainment. In this world, no object leaves off its own nature at any time. This is the experience of every one. Sri Gaudapadacharya, the grand preceptor of Acharya Sankara, says that Prakriti or the inherent nature of an object becomes part and parcel of that object; it is its characteristic quality, it is a part of the object from its very birth and does not depend upon any extraneous matter for its origin and it never ceases to be as long as the object lasts (Mandukya Karika-IV-9). The conclusion is that no Karma can directly change the nature of the ignorant, and as such, meditation and worship alone will not directly effect the destruction of nescience.

यर्द् र्देहेरृदृेष सर्दात्मकतां,

प्रगर्मष्यर्त वै सरुदुपासनया ।

न जहास्यर्त रूपमसौ र्ह र्नजं,

यत ऐक्यमर्तनर व्त्युय्ोः ॥५६

Yadi dehabhrid-esha sadatmakatam

pragamishyati vai sadupasanaya,

Na jahasyati rupam-asau hi nijam

yata aikyamatir-na bhavatyubhayoh.

Even if one, through Upasana, acquires the nature of the immortal non-dual Brahman, one will not be able to leave off one's own nature of mortality, duality, suffering, etc. For, man's nature runs counter to Brahman's nature. The two cannot become one through meditation alone. This is pointed out by Acharya Sankara also in his Upadesa Sahasri (XV-I). He says "As one cannot become another, one should never consider Brahman to be different from oneself. For, if one becomes another, one is sure to be destroyed". The Jiva, if considered really different from Brahman, as it is imagined in Upasana, cannot become Brahman as long as the Jiva exists, and if it is destroyed who is then to become Brahman? Therefore, it is concluded that through Upasana in which the triad of meditator, meditation and meditated remains as three distinct entities, the identity of Jiva and Brahman cannot be effected. Liberation would become impossible of attainment. Hence the view that the Mahavakya enjoins Upasana cannot be accepted.

An analogy which may appear to support the Upasana view, is cited:

रसर्वद्धमयः प्रकृर्तं सहजां,

प्रर्वहाय यथा कनकत्वर्मयात् ◌्।

पुरुषोऽर्प तथा सरुदुपासनया,

प्रर्तपत्स्यत एव सर्दात्मकताम् ॥ ९७

Rasaviddham-ayah prakritim sahajam

pravihaya yatha kanakatvam-iyat,

Purushopi tatha sadupasanaya

pratipatsyata eva sadatmakatam.

Base metals such as copper are seen to become gold through alchemical process. The former base metals, through alchemy, leave off their own nature and attain the nature of gold. Even so, the embodied Jiva also, through Upasana, can leave off its own inherent characteristics of birth, death, etc., and attain the Sat chit ananda nature of Brahman. Hence, there is no harm in saying that the "Tat-tvam-asi" Mahavakya inculcates Upasana of Brahman which will bestow liberation.

Now, how this analogy of copper and other base metals becoming gold does not fit in the present case is shown.

अयसोऽवयवार्न्यूर

सः,

स्थितवाननलानुगृहीर्त

मनु ।

प्रर्तपन्नमयो न तु कांचनताम् ॥९८

कनकत्वमर्त

Ayasovayavan abhibhuya rasah

जनयत्ययर्स,

sthitavan analanugrahitim-anu,

Kanakatvamatim janayatyayasi

pratipannam ayo na tu kanchanatam.

उर्दकावयवार्न्यू पयो-

रजतावयवांश यथा कनकम् ◌़।

र्वपरीतमर्त जनयत्युर्दके,

रजते च तथायर्स हेममर्तम् ◌़।। ९९

Udakavayavan abhibhuyapayo
rajatavayavamscha yatha kanakam,
Viparitamatim janayatyudake
rajato cha tathayasi hemamatim.

रसवीयरर्वपाकर्वनाशमनु-

प्रर्वनश्यर्त कांचनताप्ययसः ।

कृतकं र्ह न र्नत्यर्मर्त प्रगतं

समवेतमवश्यमपैर्त यतः ।।१००

Rasavirya-vipaka-vinasam-anu
pravinasyati kanchanatapyayasah,
Kritakam hi na nityam-iti pragatam
samavetam-avasyam-apaiti yatah.

While copper through alchemical process attains the appearance of gold, the former does not leave off its own nature and become gold with all the characterisuc nature of gold. When a base metal is heated with mercury and other chemicals or medicinal herbs, they enter into the subtle molecules of the metal, veil its original nature, and temporarily create an appearance of gold: This is a fact known to all. Even while copper appears like gold due to this treatment, the inherent nature of the former has not left it. When the power of the chemicals used exhausts itself or is neutralised through some other chemicals, the golden appearance vanishes and the original

base metal with all its inherent qualities, makes its appearance. This is similar to the apparent changes in water brought about by pouring some milk into it, and those brought about in silver by the process of gilding. In milk and water, the water appears to have become milk. What happens here is that the molecules of milk form a covering over the water molecules, preventing the characteristics of water being perceived by the sense-organs. The water has not left off its own attributes which for the time being remain imperceptible. In the case of silver also, a similar apparent modification is seen. The gold molecules cover the surface of the silver and we see a thin layer of gold and fail to see the original silver beneath it. Neither the silver nor its attribute has really undergone any change. Through proper processes, these temporary appearances, i.e., appearance of milk in water and gold in silver, can be removed, when the water and silver alone will remain with all their inherent nature. Similar is the case with the base metals appearing as gold through alchemy. With the depletion of the power of alchemy, the golden colour vanishes and the base metal with all its original natural attributes alone remains. That all man-made creations in this world are not permanent, is a well-known fact. Whatever is added on newly to an object must certainly leave it at some time or other. Artificial union ends in separation. This is the law of nature.

अमृतत्वमसत्पुरुषाय यर्द,

रि्यते सरुदुपासनया यर्जवत् ◌।

यर्जकायरवर्दन्तवर्देव वे्त्, ◌

कृतकस्य यतोवर्र्दताऽधुरुवत्ा ॥ १०१

Amritatvam-asatpurushasya yadi

kriyate sadupasanaya yajivat,

Yajikaryavad-antavad-eva bhavet
kritakasya yato viditadhruvata.

पुरुषस्य सति र्वधमरकयोः,
सरुद्दुपासनया न वे्त्सर्मर्तः ।
यर्द् संगर्तररष्यत एव तयो-
रर्वयुक्ततया न र्चरं वसतः ॥ १०२

Purushasya satascha vidharmakayoh
sadupasanaya na bhavet-samitih,
Yadi samgatir-ishyata eva tayor-
aviyuktataya na chiram vasatah.

फलमीदृर्गर्दं ंसरुद्दुपासनतः,
पुरुषस्य्र्वष्यर्त नान्यर्दतः ।
न च तर्न्नरवद्यतयाई्मतं,
र्वरुद्दुषां बहुर्दोषसमीक्षणत। ।। १०३

Phalam-idrigidam sadupasanatah
purushasya bhavishyati nanyad-atah,
Na cha tanniravadyatayabhimatam
vidusham bahu-dosha-samikshanatah.

These analogies only prove that any result obtained through Upasana cannot change the human nature in the meditator and he can never attain Brahman directly through Upasana. The changes that may accrue to him due to Upasana may leave him at any time. Through Upasana, one would attain the higher worlds amongst which the Brahmaloka or the world of Hiranyagarbha is the

highest. The attainment of Brahmaloka is some times spoken of as immortality which is only relative immortality and not the final one attaining which there is no return to the mortal world. Performers of sacrifices attain heavenly worlds after death. They have to leave these worlds and return to this world when the merits due to the sacrifices get exhausted. Similarly, those who, through Upasana on deities, attain the worlds of those deities, also have to come back to this world. The great law of Nature that everything created anew out of Karmas is liable to destruction is a relentless law which has no exemption or exception, nor does it allow itself to be overruled on any account. "Just as here in this world everything earned through work perishes, likewise in the other worlds everything earned by meritorious Karmas also perishes"-says the Chh. Up. VIII-1-vi. Acharya Sankara also in his commentary on Brahma Sutra IV-4-xxii-Anavrittih sabdadanavrittih sabdat-endorses this view.

By means of Upasana, Sayujya Mukti which is ultimate liberation of the Jiva through oneness with the non-dual Absolute is not attained, because the attributes of the Jiva who does the Upasana are quite opposite to those of Brahman. While the Jiva is limited, transient, ever changing and subject to pain, Brahman is unlimited, permanent, changeless, and Bliss itself. The union of these is, therefore, impossible; and even if it is effected, it would not remain long but would eventually result in separation. Through the Upasana of Brahman, the Jiva may attain relative immortality, but certainly not the final one which once for all, destroys the nescience through the knowledge 'I am Brahman' revealing, as it were, the ever-revealed, eternal, true nature of one's Self. Nothing is created anew and there is no fear of any loss or destruction of the existing. The other three forms of Mukti, viz., Salokya, Samipya and Sarupya (attainment of the world of the deity meditated upon, attainment of nearness to the deity and attainment of the very form

of the deity, respectively) spoken of in the scriptures may be obtained through Upasana. The wise are of the view that these three forms are not free from defects such as non-permanency, non-sentience, absence of freedom from duality and limitation through space, time and objects, etc.

सरुदुपासनकमरर्वधानपरं,
न वेर्दत एव र्ह तिचनम् ।
अहमस्र्म शरीरमर्दं ंच ममे-
त्यर्ववेकमर्तं र्वनवत्तरयर्त ॥ १०४

Sadupasana-karma-vidhanaparam
na bhaved-ata eva hi tadvachanam,
Aham-asmi sariram-idam cha
mametyavivekamatim vinivartayati.

सकलोपर्नषत्सुशरीरतूः,
परमात्मपर्दैकर्व्क्तया ।
उपर्देशवचांस्यनयैव र्ंदशा,
गमयेन्मर्तमार्न्युकुततया ।। १०५

Sakalopanishatsu sarirabhritah
paramatmapadaika-vibhaktitaya,
Upadesa-vachamsyanayaiva disa
gamayen-matiman-abhiyuktataya.

These discussions take us to the conclusion that the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi' which is capable of bestowing the final liberation, cannot be said to instruct Upasana on Brahman. The sentence is

able to cause the dawn of the knowledge of the Atman-Brahman identity by destroying the primeval nescience and bring about eternal freedom on a duly qualified aspirant. The delusion caused by non-discrimination resulting in the entertainment of erroneous ideas such as 'I am a man', 'I am this body', 'this body is mine', etc., is completely set at rest; and as a consequence, the self-effulgent, ever-shining, pure Consciousness reveals itself. In the Upanishads the words 'Tvam' and 'Tat' occurring in the sentence 'Tat-tvam-asi', signifying the Jiva and Brahman respectively, are used with the same case-termination and the sentence has to be interpreted as meaning identification of the two, viz., the Jiva and Brahman. The wise should therefore, says the author, consider it as their duty to follow the same line of reasoning in regard to the other Mahavakyas occurring in the Upanishads and instruct their disciples who are qualified for initiation into the Mahavakyas, on the Atman-Brahman identity which is their real import, rejecting completely other interpretations such as involvement of Upasana, giving metaphorical or eulogical meaning, or a topsy-turvy construction of the sentence and so on and so forth.

र्विडोऽर्प च तत्त्वमसीर्त वचो,

र्वर्नवत्तरकमेव र्नरूर्पतवान् ◌ि।

शबरेण र्ववर्द्धरतराजर्शशो-

र्नरजजन्मर्वरुदुर्क्तर्नर्दशरनतः।।। १०६

Dravidopi cha tattvamasiti vacho

vinivartakam-eva nirupitavan,

Sabarena vivardhita-rajasisor-

nija-janma-vid-ukti-nidarsanatah.

In order to further strengthen this conclusion, the author cites his own preceptor, Acharya Sankara who has also established through reasoning supported by scriptural texts and his own direct experience, that the Mahavakyas annihilate the primeval nescience and reveal the eternal, non-dual Atman-Brahman, the Reality Absolute. The great Acharya in his commentary on Mantra II-1-xx of the Br. Up. cites a traditional story to illustrate the process involved in the removal of the primeval nescience and the dawn of Perfect knowledge through the Mahavakyas instructed by a preceptor to a qualified disciple. A prince while yet a child, was somehow lost in a forest and there it was brought up by a hunter. The child-prince lived with the hunter and his family as one of its members for a number of years and grew into adolescence, thinking all the while that he was the son of the hunter. One who had knowledge about his royal birth and heritage, met him one day and communicated to him the fact that he was really not a hunter in the forest but was the heir-apparent of the kingdom, being the son of the king ruling the country. 'You are a prince', said he to the hunter-youth. This knowledge disillusioned the prince and the ignorance about his real nature vanished. He thereafter identified himself as the son of the king and eventually became the king himself. Even so, the individual consciousness, the Prince-Divine born of Brahman, the Sovereign-Supreme, the God of all gods, due to Maya, His own illusory power, is lost in the forest of this phenomenal universe and grows up as a Jiva subject to all kinds of limitations resulting in births in innumerable wombs high and low, suffering like the hunter's boy, so long as he is ignorant of his real nature. Due to meritorious actions done in past lives, he develops dispassion and acquires the fourfold qualifications, when he comes in contact with his preceptor, a Knower of Vedas and established in Brahman. The preceptor instructs him "Tat-tvam-asi', even as the man who knew about the prince's birth, told him: 'you are a prince'. This instruction of the preceptor opens the inner eye of the

disciple who directly realises his own real nature and shakes off the false nescience which drops off like a lime fruit balanced on the tip of his nose. Like the prince, in the analogy, regaining his own kingdom, the aspirant Jiva enthrones himself in Self-Sovereignty in Atman-Brahman, the Absolute.

यत एवमतः स्वशरीरगताम्,
अहर्मत्यर्ववेकमर्तं सुदृढाम् ।
प्रर्वहाय यर्दक्षरमियकं,
त्वमवेर्ह तर्दक्षरमात्मतया ॥ १०७

Yata evam-atah svasariragatam
aham-ityavivekamatim sudridham,
Pravihaya yadaksharam-advayakam
tvam-avehi tadaksharam-atmataya.

न मनो न मर्तः करणार्न च नो,
न रजो न तमो न च सत्त्वमर्प ।
न मही न जलं न च वर्ह्निर्प,
श्वसनो न न्पिर्दं परमम्॥ ॥ १०८

Na mano na matih karanani cha no
na rajo na tamo na cha sattvam-api,
Na mahi na jalam na cha vahnir-api
svasano na nabhascha padam paramam.

अमनस्कमधीकमर्नर्न्यिकं
र्वरजस्कमसत्त्वतमस्कमर्प ।
अमहीजलवहन्यर्नलाम्बरकं,

परमक्षरमात्मतयाश्रय ोः ॥ १०९

Amanaskam-adhikam-anindriyakam

virajaskam-asattvatamaskam-api,

Amahijalavahnyanilambarakam

param-aksharam-atmatayasraya bhoh.

Sri Totakacharya exhorts the aspirants: "Therefore, throw off the wrong identification with your body, and the feelings of 'I am this body', 'this body is mine', 'I am a weak man suffering the pains of transmigration', etc., which have taken deep root in you due to beginningless, unreal nescience. Understand and realise from this moment that you are really the indestructible, eternal, all-blissful Brahman, the non-dual, Supreme Absolute. Though It is devoid of all names, yet It is called Atman-Brahman, by the scriptures and preceptors for the purpose of instructing the aspirants. This transcendental and at the same time immanent Reality is the most exalted and the Supreme. There is nothing other than It and nothing beyond It. It is neither the mind nor the intellect, nor the organs. It is not any of the three Gunas, -the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, -the constituents of the Mula Prakriti. Neither is It the earth element, nor water, nor fire, nor air, nor ether. It is sans mind and sans intellect. It is without the ten organs. It has none of the three Gunas. The five elements in their gross or subtle forms are not in It. It is beyond mind and speech and therefore indescribable through human language and ungraspable through the intellect, in the usual meaning of these terms. But, being immanent and non-dual, It remains always known and grasped by every one at all times. Remaining as the innermost essence of everything conceivable and inconceivable, It eludes objective perception or understanding, and yet remains always as the presupposition of all cognition, perception, understanding and every blessed thing here. Know you

are That. You are the silent, unseen witness, homogeneous, without any kind of division or parts, completely unattached, without the ideas of 'I', 'mine', 'this', etc., eternal, wise, and completely free of all duality. The whole universe is Your own Self. Anything cognised as different or separate from 'You' is really naught. There is no doubt about this".

Section IV

THE THREE STATES AND TURIYA

THE WAKING STATE

A careful study of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, the open book placed before all by Mother Nature, is very helpful in getting a glimpse of the true knowledge of one's own real nature. Some schools of philosophy in arriving at their conclusion take into consideration only the experience of the waking state and dismiss the other two states as too insignificant for any serious observation. Life being a totality of all the three states, waking state forms only about a third of the whole. Leaving off the major two thirds portion of our life and concentrating the attention only on the remaining one third, can at best result in arriving at a partial conclusion only, and any philosophy based thereupon is therefore bound to be only incomplete and cannot be expected to cover the whole Truth. Nature could not have provided the two states of dream and deep sleep without a purpose, for, in this orderly and systematic universe, there is no place for anything without its set purpose. Even as in a big machine the minutest nut and screw also have their allocated function to perform like the big flywheel therein, even as all limbs in the body are equally important inasmuch as any defect in any limb will seriously affect the whole personality, likewise in this cosmos, there cannot be anything useless or insignificant. Dream and deep sleep states which many think in their ignorance as not of great concern in life, do have a meaningful significance to the discriminative spiritual aspirant. This is the view of the scriptures.

Sri Totakacharya deals with this subject very concisely in the next six verses.

करणार्न र्ह यर्ि्षर्या्मिुं,

प्रगमय्यमर्तर्वरषयेषु चरेत् ◌्।

तरुदु जागररतं प्रवर्दन्र्त बुधा,

न तर्दर्स्तममेत्यवगच्छ दृशेः ॥ ११०

Karanani hi yad-vishayabhimukham

pragamayya matir-vishayeshu charet,

Tadu jagaritam pravadanti budha

na tadasti mametyavagaccha drisch.

He starts with the waking state and says that the mind leads the five sense-organs (ear, skin, eye, palate and nose) towards their respective objects (sound, touch, form, taste and smell), and the sense organs along with the mind revel in the objects; and the state in which this happens is generally termed waking state. The real T is the witness of all actions of the senses and the mind in the form of Vrittis or mental modifications such as 'I run', ' see', 'I feel', 'I know', etc., and therefore It is not the organs or mind or intellect or their modifications or the ego. The real T, the witness which is of the nature of pure consciousness differentiated from everything else other than It, has no waking state.

THE DREAM STATE

The Acharya then takes up the dream state and says:

करणार्न यर्दोपरतार्न तर्दा,

र्वषयानुव्ार्हतवासनया ।

र्वषयेण र्वना र्वषयप्रर्तमं,

स्फुरणं स्वपनं प्रवर्दन्र्त बुधाः॥ १११

Karanani yadoparatani tada

vishayanubhavahita-vasanaya,

Vishayena vina vishaya-pratimam

sphuranam svapanam pravadanti budhah.

When we are asleep (not Sushupti, deep sleep) all our organs of the waking state retreat from their respective objects of that state and remain temporarily quiet, and then, in the mind arise Vrittis and we see another gross body of ours with all organs of sense and action and their respective objects, both internal and external, busily experiencing another world similar to the waking world. This is generally known as the dream state. The real 'I', the witness, is not affected by this dream experiences also.

Some say that the impressions created and stored up in the mind in the forms of desires, pleasures, pains, etc., in the waking state are seen in the dream and that there is no real experience as in the waking state. Thus they make a marked distinction between the experiences in the waking state and those in the dream state and argue that while the organs, objects and their experience in the waking state are real, those in the dream are unreal. Of the three aspects of the One Reality, the waking state is said to have Vyavaharika Satta or empirical reality, the dream state is said to have Pratibhasika Satta or apparent reality, while the Absolute is said to be Paramarthika Satta or Absolute Reality.

From the standpoint of the Absolute Reality, both the waking and dream states stand on the same footing. If we call the dream experience unreal, we should not hesitate to call the waking experience also as unreal. If we say that waking experience is real, then we have to include dreaming experience also as real, as real as the waking state, since at the time of experiencing, both have the same kind of reality, both being made up of the mental stuff. It is

only in the waking state that we say that dream was unreal, while in the state of dreaming nobody feels that it is unreal. If the dream state is a projection of the impressions of the previous waking states, the same is the case with the waking state also, for all our experiences in that state are only a projection of the impressions embedded in the mind due to previous experiences in past lives.

As stated, both the waking and dream states appear as real at the time of experiencing them, and after the experience, both states remain as ideas in the mind. None can foresee what we are to experience either in the next dream or in the next waking. The waking state disappears while dreaming, and similarly the dream state no longer exists in the waking. Both the states vanish in deep sleep. Just as the sense-objects in the waking state satisfy the desires of that state, the objects in the dream fulfil the desires in the dream. If it is said that the objects of the dream are of no use in the waking state, the same can be said of the objects of the waking state as well. The water kept near the cot of a man in sleep cannot quench
his thirst in his dream. Some may say that in the waking state what we see and hear, others also likewise see and hear; but in dream the experiences are confined only to the dreamer. They forget the fact that the persons appearing in the dream witness all that the dreamer sees. The dream world is experienced by all those appearing in the dream, even as this waking world is common to those in the waking state.

Another argument advanced by some is that there is some similarity in our successive waking states, as we see the same objects, say the same house, the same mountains and rivers, while no two dreams are similar in such matters. This also cannot stand, as it is a result of a long-standing prejudice of our mind, a prejudice born out of erroneous thinking in innumerable past lives. The wise say that this waking state is also a dream, and our dream at night is a dream within this dream. Therefore if we want to understand the

unreal dreamlike nature of the present waking state, we have to imagine a dream within a dream. Suppose a person residing at Rishikesh, one night dreams that he has gone on a pilgrimage to Badarinath and stayed there for six months. In that dream, at Badari, one night while he was sleeping in his cottage, he again dreams that he has walked all the way to Kedarnath and had his holy bath and Darsana there. He suddenly wakes up from the second dream and finds himself at Badarinath. What will be his thoughts and feelings then? He feels that he has woken up from dream, that his trip to Kedar, his bath and Darsana there were unreal, that he is really awake and staying in his cottage at Badari. Similar is our present waking state. We think that what we dream in the night is unreal and what we experience in the waking state after waking up from that dream, is real. The Kedar experience which appears as real at the time of his remaining at Kedar, becomes unreal when he wakes up and finds himself at Badari. The Badari experience also which appears as real as long as that dream continues, will turn into a mere projection of the mind only if and when he wakes up and finds himself as lying on the cot in his house at Rishikesh. As long as one continues to remain in the dreaming state and does not wake up, all his experience, whether pleasurable or painful, seems to be real, but after waking one realises their false nature. So if we want to be fully convinced of the dreaming nature of this present waking state, we must wake up from this so-called waking state. Till then this waking state will appear to us as something real and concrete, notwithstanding the repeated proclamations of the scriptures and realised sages.

In the above illustration of the double dream, suppose the person, after waking up from the Kedar experience and remaining in the Badari, discusses about the dream experience at Kedar. He will think that what he saw at Kedar was unreal and what he is seeing at Badari is real, while the fact is both are dreams. Suppose a sage

appears in the dream at Badari and tells him that all that he is experiencing then (at Badari) is a dream. Will he accept that statement? He cannot, and he will not. His mind in that state can never be convinced about the unreality of that state. He cannot understand the sage in the dream. Now, can a man in the waking condition, sitting near his cot at Rishikesh, establish any communication with the dreamer? That is also impossible. Suppose the waking man says to him that he is only dreaming. The latter could not even hear him for they are in different levels of consciousness. The sense-organs, of the waking state having given place to those of the dreaming state, the dreamer has no means of communicating with the waking world. Similar is our case. Neither those who are in the same level of consciousness, nor those who have risen up to a higher level, can help us very much to wake up from this present waking dream. Hence the difficulty we experience in the matter of realising the Truth. The process in the initiation of the disciple by a Guru through which the latter wakes up the former to the Turiya state, is a mystical one, and how the latter effects the transformation in the former, in other words, the part played by the preceptor and the scriptures in the dawn of Knowledge in the disciple, can neither be logically explained nor grasped by the individualised intellect.

Again, with reference to the unreal personality moving at Kedar, the body at sleep in Badari was real, and with reference to the body at Badari, the one lying at Rishikesh was real. Following this trend, where is the real body of ours, with reference to the present body of this waking state when this also is a dream as the scriptures and sages affirm? It is the body of Virat, the Cosmic Person. When we wake up from this waking-dream state, we will find ourselves as the Virat, say the sages. The Virat experience is also said to be the dream of Hiranyagarbha, the Cosmic Intelligence, Mind and Prana. The state of Hiranyagarbha is said to be the dream of Isvara, the

Unmanifest which state also would be realised as a dream when one transcends the Unmanifest and attains the Absolute, Pure Consciousness.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the whole dream-world is a projection of the mind, which appears real for a short time, and then disappears and gets itself merged in the mind, its original source. The light that illumines the dream-world, the consciousness which causes the mind to cognise the dream-world, is from the Atman alone. For, at that time there was no other light, neither the light of the sun, nor that of the moon, nor fire, nor speech. 'I' alone was real in the dream and the whole dream-world was an unreal manifestation of 'I' alone seen within 'Me'. The waking consciousness, the Visva becomes as it were the Taijasa, the effulgence which illumines the dream-world and experiences it. The condition of the present waking state also is similar inasmuch as it is a projection of the mind seen within 'Me', appears as real as long as this condition lasts, and gets itself dissolved into pure Consciousness when we wake up to the real waking state, the Turiya.

THE DEEP SLEEP STATE

Next follows a consideration of the deep sleep state.

करणस्य धयः स्फुरणेन्न वंना

वंषयाकृर्तकेन तु या स्थंतता।

प्रवर्दन्र्त सुषुप्र्तममुं ह्रं बुधा

वंर्नवृत्ततृषः श्रुर्ततत्त्ववंर्दः ।।।१।१२

Karanasya dhiyah sphuranena vina

vishayakritikena tu ya sthitata,

Pravadanti sushuptim-amum hi budha

vinivrittatrishah srutitattvavidah.

The Acharya states that that state in which there are no mental Vrittis in the form of objects is called Sushupti, by the knowers of the import of Vedanta, who have renounced all desires. The study of deep sleep state is more difficult than that of dream, for dreamless sleep is almost a nothing, a vacuum for the common man. But, it gives us a more clear picture of the truth of our essential nature and takes us nearer to the Goal. What is there special in deep sleep excepting that we get rest for our body and mind which get tired through the activities in the waking and dreaming states? Nothing-this is the common view of the non-discriminative man. The fact is that this apparent vacuum is really the all-full in which the states of waking and dream are in seed-form in the individual; and the whole universe in the unmanifest state in the universal counterpart.

The Upanishads such as the Chhandogya, Brihad- aranyaka and others clearly state that every day the Jiva becomes one with Brahman in Sushupti, but it does not know because of the absence of Vrittis. In the two states of waking and dream also, the Jiva remains non-different from Brahman and does not know because of the presence of the Vrittis. Thus the absence and presence of Vrittis act as the causes for the veiling of the truth in this phenomenal life. Mind which is non-different from its Vrittis, assumes the forms of the objects and then we say we know; and in the absence of objects, there are no Vrittis and no mind, and no knowing. In between two successive Vrittis there cannot be any Vritti, and hence in that interval the non-dual Brahman, the substratum shines of its own effulgence. There is no mind, no time, no space in the interval and therefore no experience in the ordinary sense of the term with its triad of experiencer, experience and the experienced. The Sushupti state is a similar state. The Ajnana (nescience) with its twofold aspects of Avarana (veiling) and

Vikshepa (projection of this world appearance), may be said to be absent in the Sushupti state; for the world which is the result of the veiling being absent, its cause, viz., the veiling power also must disappear. Atman alone remains. Some argue that the Bliss aspect alone remains in deep sleep and the other two aspects of Existence and Consciousness are veiled by Ajnana. This does not seem to be a sound argument, for the Atman in that case would have to be treated as having parts which goes counter to all scriptural import.

Just as in dream the 'I' projects an unreal world, experiences it for some time and re-absorbs it and goes to deep sleep wherein the whole universe remains absorbed in 'Me', the wise say that in the waking state also the 'T' projects this phenomenal world, experiences it for some time and absorbs it in Itself in deep sleep. This is a matter of daily experience in all. This 'I' which thus is capable of creating, maintaining and dissolving the whole universe is same in all beings. When this knowledge becomes a matter of experience, one attains the final Freedom from the shackles of this phenomenon. If we say that this world as such is real, we would be accepting the materialistic theory. On the other hand, if we say that everything here is mere idea and therefore unreal, we would be okaying pure idealism. Again if we say that there is nothing real in this world and everything is a non-entity, we will be one with the nihilists. Avoiding all these, to realise that this world (of course not as we now conceive in ignorance) is Brahman which is transcendental and immanent, and that there is nothing like unreal or non-existent, is salvation.

TURIYA

इर्त जागररतं स्वपनं च धीयः

मितोऽमिति सुषुरुप्तरर्प ।

न कर्दार्चर्दर्प त्रयमस्र्त्तममे

त्यवगच्छ सर्दास्र्म तुरीयमर्तं ॥११३

Iti jagaritam svapanam cha dhiyah
kramatokramatascha sushuptir-api,
Na kadachid-api trayam-asti-mame-
tyavagaccha sadasmi turiyam-iti.

यरुदु जागररतप्रर्भृत्र्तितयं

पररकल्र्पतमात्मर्न मूढधर्या।

अ्धानर्मदं ंतर्दपेक्ष्य,वे्त्

परमात्मपर्दस्य तुरीयमर्तं ॥११४

Yadu jagarita-prabhriti tritayam
parikalpitam-atmani mudhadhiya,
Abhidhanam-idam tadapekshya bhavet
paramatma-padasya turiyam-iti.

यर्दपेक्ष्य वे्र्द्धानर्मदं ं

परमात्मपर्दस्य तुरीयमर्तं।

तर्दसत्यमसत्यगुणि ततः,

पररर्नर्मरतवारणचेर्ष्टतवत् ।।११५

Yadapekshya baved-abhidhanam-idam

paramatma-padasya turiyam-iti,

Tad-asatyam-asatya-gunascha tatah

parinirmita-varana cheshtitavat.

Sri Totakacharya states that all these three states are the conditions of the mind. In the waking and dreaming states, the mind is active and in the deep sleep state, it remains dormant. The three states may succeed one another in the above order or may alternate without any sequence. The 'I', the indicative meaning of the word 'Tvam' in the Tat-tvam-asi' Mahavakya, and of the word 'Aham' in 'Aham Brahmasmi', is the eternal Witness of the three states, unaffected by all the three states. Therefore, one should know that the 'I' is always the Turiya (the fourth), the Transcendental Consciousness Absolute. Neither the presence nor the absence of the seen in the waking and dream states and in the deep sleep state respectively, belongs to the 'I'. All differentiation is due to delusion. The three states have no independent existence, nor an existence depending on the Self, as they are in fact unreal, non-existent as such. 'I' am the Fourth, the Seer of all the three states, non-dual, without a second apart from 'Me'.

How this name 'Fourth (Turiya)' happens to be given to the attributeless, nameless, non-dual Atman? The three states which really belong to the mind are superimposed on the Atman, due to delusion. In relation to these three states thus superimposed, the Atman is said to be the 'Fourth', only to discriminate It from the three states. The 'Fourth' is not a state at all, like, the three states, but It is the substratum which includes them and also transcends

them. The Mandukya Upanishad uses the word 'Sthanam' (state) when it refers to the three states, and omits that word when it refers to the 'Fourth', the Atman, the Witness of the three states. Just as the movements of a toy-elephant cannot be real because the elephant itself is only a toy and not a real elephant, likewise the three states are unreal, they being the characteristics or conditions of the unreal mind. Hence, Turiya is the attributeless Atman, and the name does not affect the non-duality of the Supreme Truth.

Summing up, a study of the conditions of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, a matter of daily experience by one and all, leads to the following logical conclusions:

1. That a world which appears concrete and perceptible to the senses, can become unreal and that an unreal world can appear as real.

2. That a world however much it may seem as real, can completely dissolve itself and can emerge again.

3. That Consciousness in the form of 'I' exists always, witnessing the creation, existence and dissolution of this world, non-different from It.

According to the Muktikopanishad, the Mandukya Upanishad is the one Upanishad, the proper study of which alone would bestow Liberation. This latter Upanishad, through its twelve cryptic Mantras, takes the consciousness to the Turiya by transcending the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. Provided the aspirant is sufficiently qualified and initiated and guided by his preceptor, he will certainly reach the Goal. But to the vast majority, this Upanishad remains a closed book, in spite of its having the Karika by the great Gaudapadacharya, the commentary of Acharya Sankara and further elucidations by savants and scholars. Mantra 2 of the Upanishad gives the essence of the teachings "Sarvam hyetat brahma, ayam atma brahma - All this is verily Brahman, this

Atman is Brahman". The one experiencer of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep is known by the three terms Visva, Taijasa and Prajna respectively. The experienced is the three states. He who knows both the experiencer and the experienced is not affected through experiencing-states the Karika Verse I-5. This gives the clue to the nature of the Atman described as Turiya. Discussing the various explanations of the nature of creation of this universe, the Karika gives its final verdict and states that it is the very nature of the Atman to manifest itself as the universe (1-9). The seventh Mantra of the Upanishad containing a description of the Turiya forms perhaps one of the most sublime teachings of the Sruti: "Turiya is not that which is conscious of the internal subjective world, nor that which is conscious of the external objective world, nor that which is conscious of both, nor that which is a mass of sentience, nor that which is simple awareness, nor absence of awareness. It is unseen by any sense-organ; It is unrelated to anything, incomprehensible by intellect, uninferable through reasoning, unthinkable by the mind and indescribable by speech". This completely negative description may lead the unwary to nihilism. To avoid this danger and its undesirable consequences, the Mantra continuing says: "It is the essence of the one, pure Consciousness alone, the Atman; in It the illusion of this phenomenal universe merges itself; It is that Supreme ultimate Peace which defies any description, all-bliss and non-dual; this is what is signified through the word Turiya; this is the Atman, and It is to be realised". Having stated that the Atman is only one without a second, and all the rest of the duality in the form of the phenomenal universe is really non-different from the Atman, but unreal and non-existent if differentiated from the Atman, the Karika determines, through a process of logical reasoning, the illusory nature of the universe seen distinct from the Self, and the non-dual nature of the Atman. The other philosophical systems are refuted, rather transcended on the ground of their mutual

contradictory nature and of their partial or incomplete views. The purely materialistic school says that the world alone is real and Brahman is unreal. This is rejected by all other schools because of its utterly unreasonable nature. The school of Nihilism which completely denies everything, says that both Brahman and the world are unreal. To say that something is unreal, requires something else as real, and denial of this latter reality which is a presupposition of the unreality which is affirmed, is self-contradicting. In complete contra- distinction to this school, the dualistic school affirms the reality of both Brahman and the world as two separate entities - the Purusha and Prakriti. How can there be two Absolutes? It is unreasonable and therefore this also has to be transcended. The Vedanta school confirms the reality of Brahman and the unreality of everything else separate from It. It also affirms that the universe as Brahman is real, but is unreal once it is considered different from Brahman.

Difficulty arises when we try to somehow express the Absolute which transcends mind and speech, for, all expression is possible only through these two human faculties. It is true that It is immanent in everything which includes thoughts and words also. But its immanency is such that it becomes unthinkable and unspeakable, It being the innermost essence of thought and speech themselves.

So, when one says that the Reality is Turiya which includes and transcends the three states, some may argue that the attribution of a name and thus bringing it under the mental picture is a limitation of the Reality which is always unlimited and infinite and therefore the Reality is Turiyatita, that which transcends the Fourth. Does not this name 'Turiyatita' limit the Reality? We may say it does, because we have again brought it within the realm of mind and speech. Therefore, why not we give the name Turiyatita-atita meaning that which transcends Turiyatita? But this would lead us

to the logical defect of regresses ad infinitum which has necessarily to be avoided in all logical reasoning. Such and similar other logical defects are bound to arise in all our attempts to express the 'Inexpressible' which can never become an object of any verb.

As against this view, there is another school among the Advaita Vedantins who go to the extreme and say that the state of Sushupti itself properly understood, satisfies the condition of Turiya. They cull out extracts from the Upanishads and the commentaries thereon in support of their statement. The trend of their argument is somewhat like this:

The realisation of the Truth "All this is the Self", is possible only in the waking state. The Jnana "All this is verily Brahman, there is no duality here", is a mental modification or Vritti-Jnana, which is said to be Brahma-Jnana. Vrittis are possible only in the waking and dream states and not in deep sleep. Brahma-Jnana is possible only in the waking state, whereas Brahmanubhava, direct experience of Brahman, is what obtains in deep sleep when there is absence of all mental modifications and where one experiences unadulterated bliss. When the implications of Brahmanubhava are made explicit in terms of thought by ratiocination, we get Brahma-Jnana. There is no such thing as realisation of Brahman other than the above Brahmanubhava and Brahma-Jnana. The declaration of the Sruti that this dualistic universe is but a non-existent illusion and that the Reality is non-dual is directly experienced in deep sleep. Hence, the Sadhana to be done is the removal of the superimposition through discrimination and understanding the implications of the non-dual experience of deep sleep. One in Nirvikalpa Samadhi, superconscious state, free of duality in the form of mental modification attained through the suppression of all modifications by following the method of Dhyana Yogins or Raja Yogins gets no more realisation of the Absolute than the one in deep sleep, just as a man who digs a well with great effort on the

bank of the Ganga, gets nothing but water which flows in plenty by the side and can be got without any labour. The Atman is not, therefore, the Turiya or the Fourth. It is only the 'Third', if the waking and dreaming states are counted as separate states and the Atman as their Witness. Counting the waking and dreaming states only as one state because of their common characteristic of having particularised knowledge, we have finally only two kinds of experience. One is with Visesha Vijnana - particularised knowledge comprising the waking and dreaming states-, and the other is Nirvisesha- anubhava free from any kind of particularisation of Consciousness which is called Sushupti or Samadhi according to the undisciplined or disciplined state, respectively, of the mind supposed to be there. The philosophy of deep sleep is the key to the realisation of Brahman, and the concept of Turiya is therefore to be considered superfluous.

According to Yoga Sutras of Sage Patanjali, Nidra or deep sleep is a modification of the mind based on the absence of any content in it (Abhava-pratyayalambana Vrittir-nidra, Sutra I-10). While explaining this Sutra the commentators, closely adhering to the Samkhya and Yoga philosophies based on duality, say that the state of deep sleep and the state of complete Chitta Vritti Nirodha or Nirbija Samadhi, though superficially appear similar, are quite different. But according to the interpretation of several Mantras contained in Upanishads such as the Brihadaranyaka, Chhandogya, Taittiriya and Prasna and the Brahma Sutras, there is every reason to conclude that in deep sleep, the individual Jivas merge in the Supreme Brahman alone and what they experience is Brahmanubhava. Samprasada Vidya is therefore Brahma Vidya. There is no Avidya in deep sleep, even as there is no Vidya in that state. It is beyond Vidya and Avidya. The feeling that "I did not know anything" in deep sleep, is a kind of remembrance of the condition in that state, after waking. This is generally advanced as

the reason for arriving at the conclusion that there is Avidya in deep sleep, for remembrance is but the result of a past experience. But, arguments are not wanting to show that we can have remembrance without experience also, especially in the case of experiences of Abhava or absence of mental Vrittis. Suppose a man giving a treat to his friend in an evening party at a hotel, with a number of sweet dishes one of which is Rasagulla, asks the friend: "Did you have Rasagulla in the party which you held in your house yesterday?" The friend says 'no' because, in the previous day's party he did not include Rasagulla in the menu. He remembers this fact now. But, at the time of conducting the party on the previous day, he did not have that mental Vritti, viz., "there is no Rasagulla". Even in the absence of the actual experience of this negative Vritti, he gets that Vritti next day when his friend queried him. Thus the fact that we remember after waking that we did not know anything in deep sleep, need not lead us to the conclusion that there was present such a Vritti during deep sleep and therefore there was Avidya in deep sleep. The presence of Avidya in deep sleep is only an inference drawn in the waking state where there is Avidya, without a previous corresponding experience in the deep sleep state. Further, the not knowing of anything in deep sleep is not due to Avidya, but is due to the absence of anything else other than the Atman to know in that state. None can deny the presence of pure Consciousness in deep sleep.

Hearing this, some thinkers may say that just as through the above subtle argument it is proved that the deep sleep state is bereft of Avidya, through a process of similar reasoning we can establish that the real essence of the waking and dream states is Brahman alone free of all Avidya. A sage who has direct experience of the Truth will completely agree with them and confirm their conclusion. Because, it conforms with his own direct experience

and tallies with the essence of all the Upanishadic teachings which in one voice proclaim: "All this is verily Brahman".

Another section of Vedantins (Anubhava-Brahma- Vadins) also extremists in one sense, refutes the above view and would seem to make fun of its advocates by calling them Sushupta Brahma-Vadins (deep sleep Brahman advocates). They say that Brahman, the Absolute, being beyond mind and speech, can neither be taught by a teacher nor understood by a disciple. The Absolute is Nishpratiyogika (without a counterpart) and unapproachable, and Its manifestations as Nirguna Brahman and Saguna Brahman are alone within human understanding and realisation. The Saguna Brahman entails duality, and hence the Nirguna Brahman alone has to be known and realised by the aspirants. That alone could be taught by a preceptor and realised by the disciple. Those who profess themselves as teachers of the Absolute, are really deceiving themselves and the world, and both the teachers and the taught attain not Brahman but hellish worlds. According to this section of the Vedantins, there are three groups of Sadhana Chatushtaya (fourfold spiritual practice). Through practice of the first consisting of Viveka, Vairagya, Shat-Sampat and Mumukshutva, one attains Krama Mukti, gradual Liberation; through the practice of the second constituting Darsana, Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana, one gets Jivanmukti, embodied Liberation; and through the practice of the third which consists of Nirvikalpa, Nissankalpa, Nirvrittika and Nirvasana Samadhis, one attains Videha Mukti, disembodied Liberation. Beyond and transcending all these three is the Nishpratiyogika Brahman, the Absolute, unthinkable, unspeakable and unknowable.

There is yet another section who swinging to another extreme view, says that a clear intellectual grasp alone of the nature of the Reality, is the Saving Knowledge capable of bestowing Liberation and putting a stop to future transmigration and its resulting suffering.

Their view would seem to disregard the importance of meditation and Samadhi.

The spiritual aspirants treading the path, as distinguished from those who remain satisfied with intellectual, academic dissertations, cannot afford to reject altogether any of these views, nor can they accept any of them completely as it is. Those seekers who have dedicated their lives in search of the Truth Absolute, have necessarily to be extremely discriminative in their practice and absorb the favourable point in each of these different schools of thought and reject ruthlessly all the rest. The.

followers of the extreme views, in their over-anxiety to establish their school alone in preference to others forget and overlook in toto the partial truths contained in the views of others and the defects in their own systems. The different schools are not without some truth in them, but their defect is that each is not the whole truth. The Truth Absolute is inclusive of everything and exclusive of nothing. While these schools may quarrel with one another, the Truth is free of all quarrels. Because It is free of all differences, and like the thread in a garland of pearls, It runs through everyone of these schools, through all the 'isms' such as Realism, Idealism, Nihilism, Dualism, Monism, etc., through those who quarrel, through the quarrels themselves and in the act of quarrelling and remains resplendent, untarnished, untouched by any of them and transcending all.

From the viewpoint of the Absolute; the two states of waking and dream considered distinct from the Turiya are unreal and hence there can be no difference between them from the standpoint of Truth, for any difference predicated among unreal entities can only be unreal. Looking at from the empirical standpoint also, a non-biased mind of a Sadhaka will see only similarities between the two states. The Mandukya Karika discusses, at great length, the similar nature of the two states and their complete disappearance in the

deep sleep state, and comes to the most astounding conclusion, which is generally known by the name Ajata Vada (the philosophy of non-creation), according to which there is no universe in the three periods of time, the past, present and future, separate from the Absolute. The famous verse of the Karika (II-32) which is a reproduction from the Upanishads, and also quoted by Acharya Sankara in several of his works, makes the boldest declaration:

"There is no dissolution, no birth, none in bondage, none aspiring for wisdom, no seeker of liberation and none liberated; this is the Absolute Truth". No doubt, it is difficult for the uninitiated mind to completely accept this remaining in the present level of consciousness in spite of the fact that the intellect may agree that it is the simple, unadulterated Truth. Even some of the great philosophers are seen reluctant to completely agree with Gaudapadacharya in this verse, and they try to dilute the Truth with empiricity to suit their convenience. No one can forget that this verse is trying to express the Truth of all truths, the Truth-Absolute which is beyond speech, beyond any human language of this empirical world and beyond grasp by the unregenerate mind.

From the experiences of dream, one can through inference come to the conclusion that one can experience pain and pleasure even in the absence of the so-called real objects of the waking state. It is the mind that takes the form of objects experienced and also of the senses in dream. Therefore, that in the waking state also the same thing can happen, is neither impossible nor improbable. These hard mountains and the flowing rivers and the umpteen objects perceived by the five senses in the waking state, can therefore be, nay, they are, mere imaginations of the mind, like those in dream. This conclusion can at best be an inference or probability, and cannot be a matter of actual experience as long as we are in this empirical waking state. Just as one has to wake up from the dream to realise the unreality and the complete non-existence of the dream

world, so also one has to 'wake up' from the so-called present waking state to Turiya to realise the Truth about the three states. It is not wise to contradict the conclusion of the sages who have woken up from the present waking state to the Turiya, that the three states are unreal appearances.

No one can show the Atman like one shows a cow by catching hold of its horns. Because, the Atman is not an object of perception. It always remains as the Witness of the perceiver, perceived and perception. One cannot see one's own eyes which see this vast world. To see one's eyes, one should resort to the help of a mirror which also cannot show the original eyes but can however show their reflection. The reflection seen in the mirror is not the real eyes in the face. The reflection is a mere appearance in the mirror. Further, it is always misleading. Still it indicates the presence and the nature of the real eyes in the face. Does the reflection exist as an unreal appearance? No; to the discriminative mind the appearance does not exist at all, only the mirror exists. Similarly, the internal organ, which acts like a mirror, reflects the Atman and we see this world. In the state of ignorance, this mirror of the Antahkarana may be said to reflect and refract the pure light of the Atman and the result is this world phenomena of differentiation, change, pleasure, pain, death, etc., which may be said to reveal the original homogeneous non-dual, changeless, blissful, immortal Atman, but in a distorted form. When this Antahkarana, the reflecting surface, is purified through the removal of its Vritti. it becomes transparent like a pure colourless glass and the light of the Atman passes through it unobstructed and undistorted. It is neither reflected nor refracted. A completely purified Antahkarana is no more an Antahkarana, for it becomes one with the Atman.

It is through the light of the Atman that the intellect, the mind and the senses function even in our present state of ignorance. They are illumined by the light of the Atman, the knower. The reflecting

medium necessary to know the Atman is the indescribable power of the Atman itself. Just as one's own power cannot be separated from oneself, the power of the Atman also cannot be differentiated from the Atman. If there were real differentiation, the Atman would lose its non-dual nature which the scriptures can never countenance because it is counter to the real state of affairs. Without separation, there cannot be a distinct reflecting medium, in the absence of which the states of bondage and liberation would become inconceivable. This also would go against the content of the scriptures speaking about bondage and liberation with the means thereof. To solve this difficulty, the scriptures have introduced what is known as the 'Anirvachaniya' (the Indescribable), also known by the names of Avyakrita (the unmanifested), Maya (that which is not) and Ajnana (primeval nescience). These names are almost synonyms but used with slightly different connotations where it is necessary to emphasise particular aspects of this same power. This Anirvachaniya, though one with and non-different from the non-dual Atman as its own power, stands as though separate from It and reflects the Atman. Though unreal if considered distinct from the Atman, it remains as real as the Atman to the seekers till they attain it and transcend it and reach the great Beyond.

THE NOUMENON AND THE PHENOMENON

Though the common meaning of the word noumenon is an unknown and unknowable substance or thing as it is in itself, in spiritual parlance the word signifies the Absolute, as contrasted with everything other than It, the whole of what comes under the phenomenon that is directly apprehended by the senses and the mind. The Advaita philosophy while establishing the fact of the non-dual nature of the Noumenon, the Reality, the ultimate Essence of the universe, also asserts phenomenon, the universe considered distinct from the that the Reality, is Mithya, a Sanskrit

term which is commonly misunderstood by many as meaning unreal, or non-existent. We may not be far from the right if we say that the noumenon and the phenomenon are the two aspects of the non-dual Reality. The author deals with this subject in the next 41 verses-from 116 to 156.

गगनप्रमिुं पृथ्वीचरमं,

र्वषयेर्न्यि बुद्धि मनः सहतम् ◌्।

जर्नमज्जगर्देतर्दतूर्मत,

श्रुतयः प्रवर्दन्त्युपमानशतैः ।। ११६ ।।

Gagana-pramukham prithivi-charamam

vishayendriya-buddhi-manah-sahitam,

Janimaj-jagad-etad-abhutam-iti

srutayah pravadanti-upamana-sataih.

कफर्पत्तसमीरणधातुधुतं, ◌ं

कुशरीरर्मदं ◌ंसततं ह यथा ।

प्रव्प्ररूत प्रलयांतर्मदं, ◌ं

जगर्दर्ननरवीन्दुधृतं ह तथा ।। ११७

Kapha-pitta-samirana-dhatu-dhritam

kusariram-idam satatam hi yatha,

Prabhava-prabhriti pralayantam-idam

jagad-agni-ravindu-dhritam hi tatha.

The phenomenal universe is constituted of the five great subtle elements, the ether, air, fire, water and earth; the sense-objects such as the sound, touch, form, taste and smell; the organs of sense and action, viz., the ears, skin, eyes, palate and nose, the organ of

speech, hands, feet, anus and the organ of sex; and the internal organs of the mind and the intellect inclusive of the subconscious mind and the ego. All these have got the characteristic nature of birth. Therefore, all these are perishable. They have no reality in the three periods of time. The Vedas have established the unreal nature of this universe, citing a number of convincing analogies, to prove the relentless law of Nature that that which has birth has death also. While the whole of the phenomenon thus comes under the term Mithya, the substratum for this appearance is the Reality which ever remains unaffected in any manner either by the creation, existence or dissolution of the universe, even as a desert is not flooded, not even wetted by the waters of a mirage. Just as this loathsome body of ours created out of a combination of sperm and ovum, which is filled with all kinds of repulsive matter repugnant to all the five senses, is supported by the three humours, viz., phlegm, bile and wind, even so is this universe, from the time of its creation till its dissolution, supported by fire, sun and moon. The proper functioning of the body depends on the equilibrium of the three humours. Similarly, the sustenance and welfare of the universe depend on the proper functioning of the sun, fire and moon. This is a fact well-known to the learned, and it is corroborated by the Srutis and Smritis. These three, viz., the learned, the Vedas and the Smritis declare that this universe is phenomenal.

जगतः स्थितिकारणमत्थमिदं

प्रथितं रविवह्निशशित्रितयम्।

स्मृतिवेदजनेषु शुं प्रथितं,

श्रुतिरीरितवत्यनृतं तदिदम् ॥ ११८

Jagatah sthiti-karanam-ittham-idam

prathitam ravi-vahni-sasi-tritayam,

Smriti-veda-janeshu bhrisam prathitam

srutir-iritavatyanritam tad-iti.

यरुदु रोहितशुक्लसुकृष्णमिदं

ज्वलनार्दिषु रूपमवैति जनः

तरुदु तैजसमाप्यमथान्नमिति

ब्रुवती त्रयमेव तु सत्यमिति ॥११९

Yadu rohita-sukla-sukrishnam-idam

jvalanadishu rupam-avaiti janah,

Tadu taijasam-apyam-athannam-iti

bruvati trayam-eva tu satyam-iti.

The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad in the Yajnavalkya Kanda, while dealing with the instructions of Sage Yajnavalkya addressed to Gargi, first gives a description of Brahman in negative terms such as 'not gross', 'not subtle', etc. After stating that Brahman is not a substance like other substances thus of the universe and establishing its transcendental nature, the Upanishad descending down to the causal plane of the aspirant says: "By the supreme command of this Imperishableeing, O Gargi, the sun and moon keep to their fixed course in their orbits; heaven and earth hold on to their positions, the time keeps on to its limits, the rivers maintain their courses, men praise the givers of wealth in charity; gods depend on the sacrificer and the manes on the offerings given to them" (III-8-ix). "The light which, residing in the sun, illumines the whole world, that which is in the moon and in the fire-know that light to be Mine; having become.. the fire Vaisvanara, I (the Lord) abide in the body of the living beings and associated with the Prana and the Apana, digest the fourfold food"-says Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad-Gita (XV-12 and 14). These Sruti and Smriti texts prove

that the main support or cause for the world is the group of sun, moon and fire. The world thus becomes an effect of the above three and is declared unreal. For, all effects are only mere name and form which are unreal superimpositions on the cause which alone is real.

रुचकप्रमिुं कनकार्र्दमयं,ं

रुचकार्द्ध्यधानर्नर्मत्तमर्प ।

असर्र्दत्यवगम्यत एव यतो,

व्र्यचारवती रुचकार्र्दमर्तः ।।१२०

Ruchaka-pramukham kanakadimayam

(eruchakadyabhidhana-nimittam-api,

Asad-ityavagamyata eva yato

vyabhicharavati ruchakadi-matih.

न कर्दार्चर्दर्प व्र्यचारवती,

कनकार्र्दमर्तः पुरुषस्य यतः ।

तत एव र्ह सत्यतर्याम्तं,ं

कनकार्र्दर्वपयरय एषु न र्ह ।।१२१

Na kadachid-api vyabhicharavati

kanakadi-matih purushsya yatah,

Tata eva hi satyatayabhimatam

kanakadi viparyaya eshu na hi.

Now, what is the nature of the sun, moon and fire which have been found to be the cause for this world? The Chhandogya Upanishad (VI-4-i to iii) says that in the fire, in the sun and in the moon the red, white and black colours belong to the gross elements of fire, water and earth; and therefore, when these colours, the

characteristics seen in the sun, moon and fire are removed, the objects themselves, viz., the sun, moon and fire vanish. These objects become the effects and the elements become the cause. Hence, the sun, moon and fire are unreal and the three elements alone are real.

The nature of golden ornaments such as a bangle and necklace is only gold. The cause for the very names of these ornaments is gold alone, and therefore, the names such as bangle and necklace are unreal. In a bangle there is no necklace, and vice versa in a necklace there is no bangle. Thus while the bangle is absent in the necklace and the necklace in the bangle, the gold, their cause, is present in both. Therefore, gold alone is real and ornaments being its effects, are unreal. When in a discriminating mind, the idea of the reality of gold takes firm root, that mind does not waver thereafter. The contrary idea about the reality of the ornaments no more enters the mind. The inference is that gold being the cause, becomes real, and ornaments being the effect, acquire the nature of unreality. The real gold pervades all the unreal ornaments made out of it and does not change its nature of gold when the ornaments change their names and forms. It is because of the change in the names and forms, the ornaments are said to be unreal.

रुचकार्र्दसमं ज्वलनार्र्द वे्त्,

अनृतत्वगुणेन तु सत्यतया ।

अरुणप्रमिुं ज्वलनप्ररूत,

प्रकृर्तत्रतयं कनकार्र्दसमम् ॥ १२२

Ruchakadi-samam jvalanadi bhavet

anritatva-gunena tu satyataya,

Aruna-pramukham jvalana-prabhriti

prakriti-tritayam kanakadi-samam.

अनयोपमयानृततामवर्द

च्छ्रू, र्तरर्ननर्र्दवाकरचन्मिसाम् ॅ।

अमृषात्वमर्प श्रुर्तरुक्तवती

त्रितयस्य तु रक्तपुरस्सररणः॥ १२३

Anayopamaya-anritatam-avadat

srutir-agni-divakara-chandramasam,

Amrishatvam-api srutir-uktavati

tritayasya tu rakta-purassarinah.

अनृतत्वमर्दं ॅज्वलनप्रतेृ-

यरवार्र्द वेृत्तरुदुर्दाहरणम् ॅ।

र्वतथार्वकृर्तः सततं सकला,

न तथा प्रकृर्तः श्रुर्तर्नियतः ।।१२४

Anritatvam-idam jvalana-prabhriter-

yad-avadi bhavet-tad-udaharanam,

Vitatha vikritih satatam sakala

na tatha prakritih sruti-nischayatah.

The elements of fire, water and earth, themselves are also effects of the three Gunas, the Sattva, Rajas and Tamas signified by the terms white, red and black, respectively. Therefore, like the ornaments in the above illustration, the elements come under effects and are therefore unreal. The Gunas being similar to gold, are the cause and therefore real. This conclusion arrived at through reasoning, has the support of the Sruti. The Chhandogya Upanishad

says that in the quintuplicated fire; the red colour is the colour of the fire element before quintuplication, the white colour belongs to the water element and the black to the earth element; thus vanishes the idea of fire from fire, for all modification is but name and form based upon words and that only the three subtle elements are real. The colours, white, red and black representing the Gunas being the causes and the elements their effects, the former alone are real and the latter unreal. Again, these Gunas themselves are the effects of the Purusha, and therefore, finally they also become unreal, the only Reality that remains being Purusha, the Atman. The Yoga- Sutras of sage Patanjali also support the fact that the three Gunas finally, after having fulfilled their object, viz., the bestowal of worldly experience and Kaivalya, are deprived of the process of change which comes to an end (IV-32). They attain Guna-samyam or perfect equilibrium, and finally merge in the Supreme Purusha according to Advaita Vedanta.

Following the above line of reasoning, we are led to the inference that all objects in the universe are unreal with reference to the Supreme, because they are only effects having the property of incessant change. Acharya Sankara has put this truth in a beautiful aphorism: "Yad-drishyam tannasyam-that which is perceptible is perishable". If all objects comprised under the 'seen' are thus eliminated as unreal, what remains is pure Consciousness, the Cause of all causes, the causeless Cause, which alone is real, the Absolute Reality, the Atman-Brahman. It is completely non-relative and impartible, neither immanent nor transcendent and yet remains as both immanent and transcendent. This is the conclusion of the Vedas.

प्रर्र्ददर्शरर्यषुवरसनस्य यथा-

र्वतथात्वमपास्यर्त तन्तुगुणम् ◌ि।

अपकृष्य तु तन्तुसमं त्रितयं,◌ं

ज्वलनप्रमिुस्य तथोक्तवती ॥। १२५ ।।

Pradidarsayishur-vasanasya yatha
vitathatvam-apasyati tantu-gunam,
Apakrishya tu tantu-samam tritayam
jvalana-pramukhasya tathoktavati.

अवर्नप्रमिुं र्वयर्दन्तर्मर्दं, ◌ं
र्वकृर्तस्तु परस्यव्त्यपरम् ◌्।
अनृतत्वपरं र्वकृर्तस्तु यतो-
र्वतथं तु परं प्रकृर्तस्तु यतः ।। १२६ ।।

Avani-pramukham viyadantam-idam
vikritistu parasya bhavatyaparam,
Anritatvaparam vikritistu yato-
avitatham tu param prakritistu yatah.

अत एतर्दसेर्ध सरुदुर्क्त परं,
न मृषेर्त मृषा तु ततोन्यर्र्दर्त ।
इर्त र्सद्धमतो यर्दवार्र्दमया,
जर्नमज्जगर्देतर्दतूर्मर्त ।। १२७ ।।

Ata etad-asedhi sadukti-param
na mrisheti mrisha tu tatonyad-iti,
Iti siddham-ato yad-avadi maya
janimaj-jagad-etad-abhutam-iti.

One who wants to ascertain the nature of an object like a cloth, for example, analyses it into its component parts. He finds that threads woven warp and woof, assume the name and form of cloth. He also

finds that when he removes the threads so woven, the cloth disappears. It exists no more. Thereby, he comes to the conclusion that cloth being mere name and form, an effect of thread, is unreal, and that the thread, the cause alone is real. Similar is the case with the subtle elements of fire, water and earth, the effects, and the Gunas their cause.

When the three Gunas are in equilibrium having merged in their cause, the Anirvachaniya or Prakriti, the elements vanish. When the elements themselves become unreal, what proof is required to show that the whole world which has come out of them, is a mere phenomenon? Thus is established beyond doubt the unreal nature of the universe. The scriptures are never tired of saying that all the five subtle elements beginning from the ether and ending with the earth, together with all their effects in the form of the umpteen objects of the universe, are only an apparent, illusory modification in name and form caused by a false superimposition on the Supreme Brahman, due to a similarly false nescience. All this constitutes the Apara Brahman, the Saguna Brahman, the lower manifestation of the Reality. Hence, the wise say that this changing world is an unreal effect of the unchanging Brahman, the substratum for everything other to It. The latter is therefore the only Reality, the pure unmoded, unrelated Existence-Absolute which is at the same time Consciousness-Absolute and Bliss-Absolute.

Thus is confirmed through reasoning acceptable to the scriptures, what is already stated, viz., that which is understood through expressions such as Brahman, the Atman, the Absolute, etc., is alone not unreal, and the whole phenomenal universe seen different from and other to It, being perishable, is unreal.

मनसोप्यनृतत्वमसेध्यमुतः,

प्रर्तपार्र्दतहेतुतु एव वे्त् ्।

चररतं च तदीयमसत्यमतः,

पररर्नर्मरतवारणचेष्टतवत् ॥ १२८ ॥

Manasopi-anritatvam-asedhyamutah

pratipadita-hetuta eva bhavet,

Charitam cha tadiyam-asatyam-atah

parinirmita-varana-cheshtitavat.

Having established the unreal nature of the universe and the real nature of Brahman, the Author takes up, once again, the question of the nature of the Antahkarana, the internal organ, (the mind, intellect and ego) and confirms its unreal nature like the rest of the universe. Citing the illustration of a toy elephant and the unreality of its movements because the elephant itself is unreal, the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep are classified under the unreal universe, as they are the creations of the mind. This mind is unreal because it is also an effect. Cause and effect being non-different, the effect has necessarily to be unreal when the cause is unreal. Birth is followed by death. Because effects are born out of causes, the former come under perishables and have to disappear at some time or other. Such transient objects which had no existence in the past before their birth, and which will have no existence in future after their death, but which put on the appearance of existing entities in the present, the intervening period for a short time, are considered as non-existent in all the three periods of time by the wise. Gold and golden ornaments, thread and cloth, etc., cited above, are illustrations to the point.

ननु नाभ्यवर्दघ्रर्तरुद्भवनं,

मनसस्तु सतो न च ्रप्रमुिात् ।

कथमस्य वे्र्दनृतत्वगर्त-

मरनसो ग्वन्वर्द र्नियतः ।। १२९ ।।

Nanu nabhyavadat-chrutir-udbhavanam

manasastu sato na cha khapramukhat,

Katham-asya bhaved-anritatva-gatir-

manaso bhagavan-vada nischayatah.

The Chhandogya Upanishad mentions the creation of fire, water and earth alone from Brahman (VI-2-iii-iv). The Taittiriya Upanishad when dealing with creation, refers to the birth of ether, air, fire, water and earth elements (II-1-i). A question is, therefore, raised as to how the mind whose birth is not stated by the Sruti, can become unreal. The whole universe has been proved to be unreal on the ground of it becoming an effect, born out of Brahman, its cause. Since mind is not seen to be a creation either from Brahman directly or from the elements, can it be grouped under the unreal universe?

ननु सप्तम आत्मन उद्भवनं,

मनसोऽ्र्दधावसुनार्प सह ।

कथमस्य वे्र्दमृषात्वगर्त-

मरनसोर्वकृर्तत्वगुणस्य वर्द ॥ १३० ॥

Nanu saptama atmana udbhavanam

manasobhidadhavasunapi saha,

Katham-asya bhaved-amrishatva-gatir-

manaso vikrititva-gunasya vada.

असुनाकरणैगरगनप्रमिुः,

सहमुण्डक उद्भवनं मनसः ।

पुरुषात्परमात्मन उक्तमतो,

र्वतथं मन इत्यवधारय ोः ॥ १३१ ॥

Asuna-karanair-gagana-pramukhaih
saha mundaka udbhavanam manasah,
Purushat-paramatmana uktam-ato
vitatham mana ityavadharaya bhoh.

मनसोऽन्नमयत्वमवार्द्द यतः,
ततएव र्ह तूमयत्वगर्तः ।
कुशरीरवर्देव ततोर्प शं्,
र्वतथं मन इत्यवधारय ोः ।

Manasonnamayatvam-avadi yatah
tata eva hi bhutamayatva-gatih,
Kusariravad-eva tatopi bhrisam
vitatham mana ityavadharaya bhoh.

This doubt is baseless. For, there are other Sruti texts attributing birth to the mind. The Chhandogya Upanishad itself in its seventh chapter states: Vital force, aspiration, memory, ether, fire, water, appearance and dis- appearance, food, strength, understanding, contemplation, intelligence, will, mind, speech, name, hymns, rites - all this springs from the Atman alone (26-i). The Mundaka Upanishad declares: "From Him originate the vital force as well as the mind, all the senses, space, air, fire, water and earth that supports everything" (II-1-iii). In the Chhandogya Upanishad again, we find sage Uddalaka instructing his son Svetaketu in the following words: "Food eaten gets divided itself into three parts. The gross part becomes faeces which is thrown out, the subtler part becomes flesh and the subtlest becomes the mind. Mind is made up of food, the vital force is made up of water and speech is made up of fire" (VI-5-i and iv). These Vedic statements go to prove that mind also has birth and it has its birth from the Atman. Because it

has birth, it follows that it is subjected to death also like all other objects of the world. In other words, it comes under effects, and as all effects have been proved to be unreal, it also is unreal, the Atman its cause alone being real. Being a modification of food, is another reason for including the mind among the products of unreal elements. The Taittiriya Upanishad Mantra which declares that the enlightened man is not afraid of anything after realising that Bliss of Brahman failing to reach which words turn back along with the mind (II-9), also proves beyond doubt that the mind being an effect of Brahman, its cause, cannot reach the latter.

कुरु पक्षर्ममं गगनप्रमिुं,
जर्नमत्सकलं न र्ह सत्यर्मर्त ।
प्रथमं चरमं च न चार्स्त यतो,
रुचकार्र्दवर्र्दत्युपमांच वर्द ॥ १३३ ॥

Kuru paksham imam gagana pramukham
janimat sakalam nahi satyam iti,
Prathamam charamam cha na chasti yato
ruchakadivad-ityupamam-cha vada.

कनके रुचकार्र्द न पूवरमतू,
चरमं च न र्वद्यत इत्यनृतम् ◌ि।
अधुनार्प तथैव समस्तर्मर्दं,◌ं
जर्नमर्ियिार्र्द वे्र्दनृतम् ◌ि।। १३४ ।।

Kanake ruchakadi na purvam-abhut
charamam cha na vidyata ityanritam,
Adhunapi tathaiva samastam-idam
janimad viyadadi bhaved-anritam.

The same fact is established through inference one of the six Pramanas (valid proofs) accepted by Vedanta, the other five being direct perception, comparison, verbal testimony which includes Vedas, presumption and non-apprehension. In Logic, inference has five component parts or syllogism. They are: (1) proposition to be proved, (2) reason, (3) example, (4) application and (5) conclusion (Pratijna, Hetu, Udaharana, Upanaya and Nigamana, respectively). In the present case under consideration, the proposition to be proved is: The universe beginning from the subtlest ether down to the grossest matter, including the mind, has birth, that it is absent before its creation and after dissolution, that it appears to exist only in the middle and that it comes under 'effects' which are known to be unreal. The examples are ornaments made of gold, cloth born out of thread, pots created from earth and so on. How these analogies are applied in the present case of the mind? All that has birth has death and hence cannot be real, for Reality is that which remains unchanged and unsublimated by any cause during all the three periods of time. The Mandukya Karika (Verse II-6) says: "That which is non-existent at the beginning and at the end is necessarily non-existent in the middle also. The objects are like illusions we see and still they are erroneously regarded as real". The whole universe and the mind have been proved to have birth and death, and therefore they have to be treated as unreal-this is the reasoning. The final conclusion is that the world and the mind which one sees as external to oneself, are illusory appearances and therefore unreal.

कनकार्र्दषु यदुयुपजातम्–ू

रुदुचकप्रमिुं पृथगेव ततः ।

अर्धकं पररणाममीy कुतो,

न वे्र्र्दर्त वाच्यमवश्यमर्मर्दम् ॥ १३५ ।।

Kanakadishu yadyupajatam abhud

ruchaka pramukham prithag-eva tatah,

Adhikam parinamam amishu kuto

na bhaved iti vachyam avasyam-idam

कनकप्रतेू व्यरर्तररक्तमतो,

रुचकार्द न र्वद्यत एव कुतः ।

पृथगग्रहणात् ◌ कनकप्रतेू-

ररर्त कारणमेव सर्दन्यर्दसत् ◌ ।। १३६ ।।

Kanaka-prabhriter-vyatiriktam ato

ruchakadi na vidyata eva kutah,

Prithag agrahanat kanaka-prabhriter

iti karanam-eva sad-anyad-asat.

In the analogy of gold and ornaments made out of it, if the ornaments were really different from gold and added on to it during the process of manufacture, the weight of the ornaments after their birth would have increased. This, we do not find in any case. The gold alone was before the birth of the ornaments, the gold alone is during the appearance of the ornaments and the gold alone will be when the ornaments disappear at the time of their melting. Name and form alone have been superimposed on the gold in the process of the creation of the ornaments and nothing new is really added to the gold, and hence it is that we do not find any increase in weight. Name and form can never become real as they are always changing. The Sarasvati Rahasya Upanishad classifies every object here into five factors, viz., Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, Form and Name, and states that the first three constitute the nature of Brahman, the Reality, and the remaining two form the characteristics of the unreal world (Mantras 23 and 24). The gold and the necklace are not as separate and distinct as a cow and a horse. A horse exists in

the absence of a cow, and vice versa a cow exists in the absence of a horse. While gold exists in the absence of the necklace, the necklace has no existence in the absence of gold. This is a matter of common knowledge. Hence, gold and golden ornaments are not distinct. This proves that cause and effect are not different. Two entities cannot be non-different and at the same time real. Hence, we have the inference that the effect is unreal, while the cause alone is real.

This conclusion takes us to the next step in our march towards the ultimate truth, the Pure Consciousness free of all relations. In the cause-effect chain, the two links are interdependent. We have proved that the effect is unreal and that the cause alone is real. When the effect is unreal and does not exist, where is the place for the cause? The cause also loses its nature as cause. We have also established that all except Brahman, being the creation of Brahman, is unreal. Now, when the universe, an effect of Brahman, is non-existent, Brahman loses its nature as the cause of this universe, and shines in its pure resplendence, freed of the triad of space, time and causation.

ननु नाम पृथर्नवकृतेः प्रकृते-
रथ रूपमथार्प च कायरमतः ।

कथमव्यर्तररक्ततयावगमः,
प्रकृतेर्वरकृतेररर्त वाच्यर्मर्दम् ॥ १३७ ॥

Nanu nama prithag vikriteh prakriter-
atha rupam-athapi cha karyam-atah,
Katham-avyatiriktataya-avagamah
prakriter-vikriter-iti vachyam-idam

इह वीरणतन्तुसुवणरमृर्दः,

किशिाकहाररि्ाकृतयः ।

उपलब्धजनैरुपलब्धमतो,

न ्र्दार्स्त ततः प्रकृतेर्वरकृतेः ।। १३८ ।।

Iha virana-tantu-suvarna-mridah

kata-sataka-hara-ghatakritayah, Upalabdha-janair-upalabdham-ato

na bhidasti tatah prakriter-vikriteh.

र्वकृर्तयरर्द नार्स्त पृथक् प्रकृते-

नर रि्र्त्र्दार्प्य्धाप्रत्ेः ।

इर्त धीर्वरफला तव येनजनै-

र्ववर्देनयनेन मृदार्द्य्र्दा ।। १३९ ।।

Vikritir-yadi nasti prithak prakriter-

na ghateta bhidapi-abhidha-prabhriteh,

Iti dhir-viphala tava yena janair,

vivide-nayanena mridadyabhida.

A doubt may arise here. One sees the name and form of the cause as quite different from the name and form of the effect. The name and form of gold are not the same as the name and form of a bangle made out of gold. Therefore, there should be difference between cause and effect. How can one say that there is non-difference or identity between them? This doubt is cleared through another illustration. In this conventional world, people in their pragmatic dealings with one another, cognise names and forms of objects like a mat, a cloth, a necklace, and a pot only in their causes which are grass, thread, gold and earth respectively and not apart from them. For, in the absence of these causes, they do not see the effects. When the thread is removed from a cloth, where is the cloth! Similarly, when the grass is separated from the mat, has the mat

any existence! Can the necklace and the pot exist after the gold and the earth are removed! All the effects become non-existent with the non-existence of their respective causes. Then, how can anyone posit difference between the cause and its effect? Even the most learned, adepts in logical reasoning cannot contradict this simple logic. Names and forms are only superimpositions both in the cause and in the effect and are therefore illusory, and any difference attributed to them must also be an illusion.

For this reason, the effect is non-different from the cause. Because of the non-difference of cause and effect, their names and forms also cannot have any real difference. The difference seen in them is illusory, being the result of superimposition. The name 'pot' and its bellied form with narrow neck, as well as the name 'clay' and its round form when it is a ball of clay before it is made into a pot, are both superimposition on the Atman which is the real essence of both the pot and clay. It is due to the erroneous ideas of difference in the non- different, homogeneous, non-dual, pure Consciousness, born out of nescience, people enter into fruitless arguments about differences in this world. The non-difference between a pot and clay is a matter of daily direct perception, for when the clay is removed, the pot disappears from our sight. If there is real difference between cause and effect, then alone can one cognise real difference in their names and forms also. Hence, the difference one perceives in their names and forms is only illusory; and the difference which is alleged through inference is contradicted and refuted through direct perception which is a stronger proof than inference, for the latter depends always on the former for its validity.

ननु रूपमथो अर्प कायरमथो,

अ्धार्प निस्य पृथर्नवर्र्दता ।

न पृथक्त्वमुपैर्त निः र्कर्मर्त,

प्रर्तवाच्यमवश्यमर्दं ंकुशलैः ।। १४० ।।

Nanu rupam-atho api karyam-atho
abhidapi natasya prithag-vidita,
Na prithaktvam-upaiti natah kim-iti
prativachyam-avasyam-idam kusalaih.

असतो न कथञ्चन जन्म वे्त्,ि
तर्दसत्वत एव िपुष्पर्मव ।
न सतोर्स्त व्: पुरतोर्पव्ात्,ि
यत आत्मवर्देव सर्ृदष्टर्मर्त । १४१ ।।

Asato na kathanchana janma bhavet
tad-asatvata eva kha-pushpam-iva,
Na satosti bhavah puratopi bhavat
yata atmavad-eva sadishtam-iti.

Even if we accept for the sake of argument, difference between the names and forms of the effect and those of cause in this world phenomenon and its conventional transactions, there cannot be any difference in the cause and effect themselves. Another illustration is cited to support this fact. An actor in a drama may assume different characters relevant to the various scenes. One and the same man may assume the part of a king in one scene, a maid servant in another, a clown in a third, and so on. Here, one and the same man assumes different sets of name, form and action, each set different for each scene, and all of them different from his original set of real name, form and action which he has before the beginning of the drama and after its close. But the man himself remains unchanged during all these processes, whether he is in the stage as an actor or outside in his original form. The differences in

the names, forms and actions are assumed by the man and they are not, therefore, real. Similarly, all differences in the names and forms of both the cause and effect in this pragmatic world, are illusory and the effect is non-different from its cause.

Birth can never be attributed to the non-existent, because the non-existent itself is as unreal as a sky-flower. Any amount of logic cannot help one to establish birth to a non-existent sky-flower. Neither can one attribute birth to the existent, for the existent is already existent. The Vaiseshikas argue that the non-existent has birth. This is due to delusion, for the non-existent is similar to the son of a barren woman, and can never have any birth. It is impossible of occurrence. The Sankhyas, similarly, assert birth for the existent which is also an impossible feat, because the existent is already existent. It is, therefore, existent even before the birth attributed by them. How can an already existing entity be born? The Sankhyas also admit the eternal nature of the 'Existent'. Hence, their theory attributing birth to the 'Existent' is mere illusion. According to Vedanta, both the Vaiseshika and Sankhya theories in this matter, do not represent the full truth and have therefore to be transcended. This position is clarified by Sri Gaudapadacharya in his Mandukya Karika (III-27 & 28) in which he says: "That which is ever existent appears to pass into birth through illusion or Maya. This is not from the viewpoint of the Absolute Reality. He who considers that this appearance of passing into birth is real, as a matter of fact, asserts that what is born is born again, which assertion would lead to the logical defect of regresus ad infinitum. Similarly, the unreal or non-existent cannot be born either really or through Maya, for the son of a barren woman is not born either in reality or in illusion".

कर्पलासुररपञ्चशिर्ऱ्दमतं,
पररगृह्य वर्देद्यर्ऱ्द कर्ऱ्ऱ्दर्दम् ॒।

न कर्दाचन जन्म वर्दार्म सतः,

प्रवर्दार्म तु यच्छृणु तत्त्वमर्प ॥ १४२ ॥

Kapilasuri-panchasikhadi-matam
parigrihya vaded-yadi kaschid-idam,
Na kadachana janma vadami satah
pravadami tu yacchrinu tat-tvam-api.

प्रकृताववर्शष्टतया यर्द-ू

र्दधुना तु तर्देवे र्वशेषयुत ।

र्नरवद्यर्मर्दं ंप्रर्तार्त मम,

प्रवर्दात्र र्वरोधमवैर्ष यर्द् ॥ १४३ ॥

Prakritavavasishtataya yad-abhud-
adhuna tu tad-eva viseshayutam,
Niravadyam-idam pratibhati mama
pravadatra virodham-avaishi yadi.

सर्दयुज्यत येन गुणेन पुरा,

प्रकृतौ स इहार्स्त न वेर्त वर्द ।

यर्द् र्वद्यत एव पुरा प्रकृता-

वधुनार्प र्वशेषयुतत्वमसत् ं।। १४४ ।।

Sad-ayujyata yena gunena pura
prakritau sa ihasti na veti vada,
Yadi vidyata eva pura prakrita-
vadhunapi viseshayutatvam-asat.

यर्द् नार्स्त पुरा स गुणः प्रकृता-

वसरुद्भवनं व्तोर्ऽमतम् ॒।

जननेन च सत्त्वमुपात्तवतो,

जर्नमत्त्वत एव र्वनष्टरर्प ।। १४५ ।।

Yadi nasti pura sagunah prakrita-
vasad-udbhavanam bhavatobhimatam,
Jananena cha sattvam-upattavato
janimattvata eva vinashtir-api.

व्तोर्ऽमतं पररहतुरर्मदं॑,

न कथञ्चन शक्यत इत्यमुतः ।

कण्क्षमतेन समत्वर्मदं॑,

व्तोर्ऽमतं शनकैरगमत् ॒॥ १४६ ॥

Bhavatobhimatam parihartum-idam
na kathanchana sakyata ityamutah,
Kanabhaksha-matena samatvam-idam
bhavatobhimatam sanakair-agamat.

असतोव्नं नशनं च सतः,

कणो्र्जमतं र्वर्दतं कर्वर्ः ।

उपपर्त्तर्वरुद्धतया सुशं॑

तर्दा्र्ण मयार्प र्वरुद्धतया ॥ १४७ ॥

Asatobhavanam nasanam cha satah
kanabhoji-matam viditam kavibhih,
Upapatti-viruddhataya subhrisam
tad-abhani mayapi viruddhataya.

Sri Totakacharya proclaims that if anyone accepting the Sankhya philosophy of sage Kapila, his followers Asuri, Mimamsakacharya, Pancha-sikha and others like the followers of the Charvaka philosophy, say that Sat or Existence has birth, he would say that it can never be, on the following grounds:

The effect which remains in the cause in seed-form before creation of the effect, alone manifests itself into name and form in creation. This theory is free of defects and nobody can contradict it on any logical ground. The attributes of the effect which remain merged in the cause in a latent form before the birth of the effect, alone appear in the effect after manifestation. This also cannot be refuted by anyone. To say that the attributes which manifest themselves in the effect after its creation, should have been in a manifested form in the cause, is unreasonable. If the attributes of the effect were non-existent in seed-form in the cause before the birth of the effect, then the theory of the opponents would mean birth of Asat or non-existence. And this non-existence would meet with destruction, because of the very fact of its birth. One should not reject or contradict one's own philosophy. This aspect of the Sankhya school seems to be moving towards the theory of the Vaiseshikas, the followers of sage Kanada, who assert the birth of the Asat and death of the Sat. For the simple reason that this goes counter to all logical reasoning, it is considered defective by the wise. The author says that he therefore considers the Vaiseshika view as unacceptable. How can anyone accept the birth of a non-existent pot! Similarly, can any reasonable person concur with the theory that an existent pot meets with complete destruction! Both the views are against all logic, experience and the import of the scriptures and have therefore to be rejected.

प्रर्तषद्धर्मर्दं ंकणोर्जमतं-

हररणार्प समस्तगुरोगुररुणा ।

वचनेन तु नासत इत्यमुना,

रुबुवता च पृथातनयाय र्हतम् ॥ १४८ ॥

Pratishiddham-idam kanabhoji-matam

harinapi samasta-guror-guruna,

Vachanena tu nasata ityamuna

bruvata cha pritha-tanayaya hitam.

Bhagavad-Gita Verse II-16 is cited in support of this Vedantic truth. With a view to remove the delusion of Arjuna and bestow on him the Supreme Wisdom, the Lord, the Preceptor of all preceptors says: "The unreal hath no being, there is no non-being of the Real. The truth about both has been seen by the knowers of Truth (or the seekers of the Essence)" - this is the English version of the verse given by Gurudev H.H. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj. This completely transcends the Vaiseshika theory and anyone who follows the philosophy of Vaiseshika would, therefore, be acting against the instructions of the Lord.

The non-existent cannot become the existent and the existent

cannot become the non-existent. Can the non-existent become non-existent? No, since the non-existent is already non-existent. Similarly can the existent become existent? The answer to this also is 'No', because the existent is already existent. Thus both the non-existent and the existent can neither become the non-existent nor the existent.

Does existence exist in non-existence? The answer can be both 'No' and 'Yes'. No, because if existence were to exist in non-existence, then the non-existence could no more be called non-existence. And yes, because if existence of non-existence were not there, how can it be called non-existence! Similarly to the question whether existence exists in existence, we can give both the answers 'No' and

'Yes'. No, because if existence is said to exist in existence, then there will be existence of existence which will be redundant and will lead to the logical defect of absence of finality. Yes, because if existence were not there, then existence would become non-existence.

Now, enquiring further into the contents of the answers 'Yes' and 'No' which we have given to these apparently naughty questions, what do we find? 'Yes' is a word of affirmation or consent and 'No' is a word of denial. When we say 'Yes' in reply to any question, in addition to affirming something, we indirectly or covertly deny something else. Hence the word 'Yes' can be said to contain the meanings of both the words 'Yes' and 'No'. Likewise, when we say 'No' in answer to a particular question, while directly denying that thing, we indirectly confirm something else. Hence the word 'No' also contains in it the meanings of both the words 'Yes' and 'No'.

Is this all a play of words? Certainly not. The great scriptures will never babble in or engage themselves in wordy gymnastics. This gives the clue to the true nature of the world in which we live. When we go deep into the root of any thought, word or object, we would seem to lose the very ground on which we stand. The fact is that such enquiries driven to their logical limits, would take our mind nearer to the Noumenon behind the world phenomenon, which though cannot be brought within the purview of the mind and speech in their present condition, has been given the nomenclatures such as the Absolute, the Atman, the Supreme, Brahman, etc. All the Upanishadic texts and the connected treatises try to express and expound this greatest and at the same time the simplest Truth alone.

The scriptures say that the Bhava (existence) of a particular object such as say a book, comprises within it the Abhava (non-existence) of all other objects in this universe. They broadly classify non-existence under four main categories, precedent non-existence,

mutual non-existence, non-existence due to destruction and complete non-existence. It is not difficult to prove that none of these four kinds of non-existence can ever comprehend in it absence of 'existence', for the reasons discussed above.

We can, through a purified intellect, imagine the non-existence of all 'objects' of this phenomenal world, which will leave the 'Subject' untouched. We may say that the Subject will in that case lose its subjectivity. Yes, but it does not land us in nihilism. On the other hand, we reach the Existence-Absolute which is non-different from Consciousness-Absolute and Bliss-Absolute. It is free of objectivity and subjectivity. It is neither existence nor non-existence nor both, but includes all and yet remains transcending all. Existence and non-existence, Real and unreal, Being and becoming, Being and doing, Eternal and temporal, all these signify the two phases of the one, non-dual Reality.

असति सति न जन्मवे्-

र्ददर्त पूवरमवादुयुपपर्त्तयुतुम् ◌्।

सर्दसच्च न जायत एव कुतो,

नर्ह वस्तु तथार्वधमर्स्त यतः ॥ १४९ ॥

Asatascha satascha na janma bhaved-

iti purvam-avadyupapatti-yutam,

Sad-asat-cha na jayata eva kuto

nahi vastu tathavidham-asti yatah.

It has been established that both Sat and Asat have no birth. There is another school of thought (Digambara Mata) which argues that if Sat and Asat cannot have birth separately, their combination, Sat-Asat can have birth. This also has to be refuted, as there cannot be an entity such as Sat-Asat or existence-cum-non-existence. They are like light and darkness with diametrically opposing

characteristics. They cannot, therefore, exist together in combination side by side. In the absence of such a combination itself, how can anyone predicate birth for that non-existent entity? It is impossible, even as no one can, through any reasonable logic, prove the birth of non-existent entities such as the son of a barren woman, or a man's horns, or a hare's horns.

सर्दसत्त्वमतीत्य मनः प्रतृे-

नरकथञ्चन वृत्तररहास्र्त यतः ।

तत एव मनःप्रमिुख्य वो,

न वेर्द्दत सवरसुवेद्यमर्त ।। १५० ।।

Sad-asattvam-atitya manah-prabhriter-

na kathanchana vrittir-ihasti yatah,

Tata eva manah-pramukhasya bhavo

na bhaved-iti sarva-suvedyam-iti.

When the birth of Sat, Asat, and Sat-Asat is thus ruled out as impossible of occurrence, the birth of the universe including the mind can by no means be posited and proved. Nothing is, therefore, born or created. The three states of waking, dream and deep sleep have no birth, and therefore no existence Thus is established the Ajata Vada of the Vedantic school of thought, according to which there is nothing other to the Absolute, no creation, no preservation and no dissolution of the universe. If the aspirant is not able to grasp this Supreme Truth and realise It, let him, as a preparatory step, consider the universe which he perceives, as unreal appearance like the rope-snake, a mirage, etc., following the Vivarta Vada and prepare the mind for the revelation of the final Truth.

यर्द्द नाम कथञ्चर्दमुष्यव्:,

सर्दसत्त्वमपेक्ष्य्वष्यर्त वः ।

अमृषात्वममुष्य तथार्प न तु,

श्रुर्तरस्य मृषात्वमुवाच यतः ।। १५१ ।।

Yadi nama kathanchid-amushya bhavah

sad-asattvam-apekshya bhavishyati vah,

Amrishatvam-amushya tathapi na tu

srutir-asya mrishatvam-uvacha yatah.

No reasoning of the other philosophical schools can establish the reality of the creation and existence of this phenomenal universe of names and forms. And the Upanishads have positively asserted the unreality of the universe, by establishing the non-dual nature of the Absolute Reality. The fact is, therefore, that in the Absolute there is no universe at all apart from It. But, the existence of the universe is accepted by the scriptures not as real as the Reality, but having an empirical reality. Therefore, from the standpoint of the Absolute, the appearance of the universe is explained away as an illusion brought about by delusion born out of nescience. This is only an explanation in the empirical realm for those who cannot avoid the cognition of the universe separate from the Supreme and not from the point of view of the Absolute Reality which cannot brook even a trace of duality besides It. This is supported by a number of Vedic texts: (i) All this is verily the Atman alone, (ii) Everything here is verily Brahman alone, from Him all the universe is born, in Him it dissolves and by Him it is sustained, (iii) All names and forms are merely modification of speech (Chhandogya Upanishad VII-25-ii, III-14-i, and VI-4-i respectively) and (iv) All this universe is nothing but Brahman (Mundaka Upanishad II-2-xi).

मनसोनृततैवमवार्द यतः,

तत एव र्ह तस्य मृषा चररतम् ◌्।

यत एव मृषा मनसिररतं,

तत एव पुरोर्द्दतर्सर्द्धरतू ◌्।। १५२ ।।

Manasonritataivam-avadi yatah

tata eva hi tasya mrisha charitam,

Yata eva mrisha manasas-charitam

tata eva purodita-siddhir-abhut.

यर्दपेक्ष्य तु नाम वे्त्र्तयं,

परमात्मपर्दस्य तुरीयर्मर्त ।

तर्दसत्यमसत्यगुणस्तु यतः,

पररर्नर्मरतसपरर्वसपरणवत् ◌्॥ १५३ ॥

Yad-apekshya tu nama bhavet-tritayam

paramatma-padasya turiyam-iti,

Tad-asatyam-asatya-gunastu yatah

parinirmita-sarpa-visarpanavat.

नर्ि्लस्य मनः प्रमुिस्य यतो,

र्वतथत्वमवार्र्द पुरा तु मया।

श्रुर्तयुर्त्तबलेन ततोऽयिकं,

परमक्षरमेव सर्दन्यर्दसत् ◌्॥ १५४ ॥

Nikhilasya manah-pramukhasya yato

vitathatvam-avadi pura tu maya,

Sruti-yukti-balena tatodvayakam

param-aksharam-eva sad-anyad-asat.

Through reasoning, it has been established that in this world of cause and effect, the former alone is real and the latter unreal. Based on this principle, the unreality of the universe and the mind, which have been proved to be the effects of Brahman the ultimate cause, has also been established. Going still further, it has been proved through logical reasoning, that nothing here is really born, and nothing has any real existence and that the universe and the mind, therefore, do not really exist in the three periods of time. From these follow the natural conclusion that all thoughts, imaginations, willing, desiring, etc., of this unreal and non-existent mind are also as unreal and non-existent as the mind itself which is their cause. Thus vanish the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep states along with the whole of this transmigratory life. No one will be perturbed by seeing the movement of a rope-snake. That a deluded man is excited and agitated at it, does not make the snake and its movement real in any manner. Similarly to a discriminative man, the mind and its play can never become real. The fact that the Jiva is really Brahman the indestructible, non-dual, eternal, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute which transcends the Adhyatmika, Adhibhautika and Adhidaivika, the three Gunas and its cause, the primordial matter, is confirmed.

Now, when all this is an unreal superimposition, then one can infer that there must be a real substratum for the unreal superimposition and that is Brahman-Atman, the Absolute. This kind of inferential conclusion arrived at by the aspirant cannot take him to the realisation of that Reality. It will remain as an intellectual conviction alone, and mere intellectual conviction alone cannot do away with misery and pain once for all. Inference, one of the Pramanas or valid proofs in all empirical matters, cannot help the aspirant in attaining that which is the support and essence for even that inference and which gives validity for it. For that matter, none of the accepted proofs can do it. They can help the aspirant in the

preliminary discrimination of the Eternal and non-eternal, through the process of 'Neti Neti' (not this, not this). The result of this process can only be of a negative nature. Absolute Reality is the most positive among all positives, nay, It is the positivity in the positives, and remains transcending positivity also. How can this Reality be attained through mere elimination process alone! The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad illustrates this point through the story of sage Yajnavalkya and Gargi (III-6 and 8). Gargi first questions sage Yajnavalkya about the ultimate Reality basing her questions on the logic of cause and effect. Answering all her questions, Yajnavalkya takes her up to the Avyakrita, the Unmanifest, the same position which one finally reaches when one completes the process of negation through the 'Neti Neti' doctrine. When Gargi further pushes her enquiry following the same methodology and asks the sage about the cause of the Unmanifest, the sage flatly refuses to furnish an answer. He points out to her the futility of her attempt to know the Truth and the great danger in which she is landing herself. "O Gargi, if you pursue further your logic, your head shall fall off"- warns the great sage. Gargi now retraces her steps, leaves of all logic and basing her questions on the Sruti, enquires about the support for the Unmanifest. Her question is such that even the best among the learned, proficient in the scriptures will only be in a fix. For, according to the science of Logic, the charge of non-comprehension (Apratipatti) would be levelled against him if he fails to answer, while on the other hand, in case he answers the question notwithstanding the fact that it could not be explained in the usual way, he would be censurable for a logical contradiction (Vipratipatti). But the omniscient sage, being himself established in the Supreme Reality, answers the question without subjecting himself to the above two logical defects.

The same truth is revealed to us in a slightly different manner, by the same Upanishad in the instruction of the sage to his consort

which has reached the pinnacle of spiritual wisdom to which the purified human intellect can soar up. After eliminating this universe and proving its oneness with the Atman before creation, during its existence and after dissolution, sage Yajnavalkya imparts the final instruction regarding the merging of one's own ego or intellect which has been engaging in the elimination process so far, through the analogy of a lump of salt dropped in the ocean dissolving itself in the ocean. Naturally, this raises a doubt in Maitreyi's mind. "After all, am I also to be lost? Is it for my own destruction that all this spiritual practice has been undergone? How can T', the Atman, become non-existent? I have heard from the scriptures and from you yourself, my dear husband and revered preceptor, that the Atman is immortal, eternal, infinite, immediate, transcendental and non-dual. How can there be destruction for the Atman?" The sage clears this doubt. He explains that it is the individuality, the intellectual Atman, the Vijnana-Atman that finally gets merged in the infinite ocean of Sat-Chit-Ananda, the unrelated, non-dual Atman. All objectivity ceases to exist and along with it subjectivity also merges itself in the non-dual Atman. The Atman, the only Reality can never become non-existent, for it is the essence, the Atman of non-existence also. Only when there is the feeling of duality, as it were, in the absence of the knowledge of the Atman, one experiences particularised knowledge of objects apart from the Self, in the form of thoughts through the mind and in the form of objects through the sense-organs. But, in the ultimate stage, when to the knower of Brahman everything has become the Brahman itself, there is nothing other to Itself, and what is there to see with what and what is there to know with what! Can any one know the Knower! Thus the Upanishad reveals the non-dual, Atman-Brahman which though remains ever revealed, appears to be veiled by a false unreal Ajnana, and is therefore said to be revealed through Jnana.

Only with reference to the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, the appellation 'Turiya, the Fourth' has been given by the scriptures to the Ultimate Truth forming their substratum and yet remains transcendental. These three states have been proved to be unreal. For, they are like the movements of a rope-snake seen in semi-darkness. Reasoning and Sruti texts establish that the universe including the mind, intellect and ego is unreal, which also at once herald the truth about the Absolute. There is nothing besides the Absolute and anything other to It is unreal, as unreal as the rope-snake or the sky-flower. The Reality transcends the three periods of time and the three kinds of limitations. This is brought out by the Taittiriya Upanishad Mantra: "Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma - Truth-Consciousness-Eternity Brahman" and similar other Mantras of the Upanishads. The unreality of everything other to It is expressed in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad Mantra: "Ato Anyadartam - anything different from Brahman is unreal and non-existent". Thus is established the identity of Jiva and Brahman through the Mahavakya of the Upanishad 'Tat-tvam-asi-You are Brahman',

यर्दपूवरमबाह्यमनंतरेकं,

न च र्कञ्चन तस्य व्त्यपरम् ◌्।

इर्त वेर्दवचोऽनुशशासयतो,

र्वतथं परतोन्यर्दतः प्रगतम् ◌्।। १५५ ।।

Yadi purvam-abahyam-anantarakam

na cha kinchana tasya bhavatyaparam,

Iti vedavachonusasasayato

vitatham paratonyad-atah pragatam.

प्रर्तर्षध्य यतो बर्हरन्तरर्प,

स्वर्वलक्षणमात्मन उक्तवती ।

अवबोधर्नत्वमतोन्यर्दस-

ल्लवणैकरसत्वर्नर्दशरनतः ।। १५६ ।।

Pratishidhya yato bahirantar-api

Svavilakshanam-atmana uktavati,

Avabodha-ghanatvam-atonyad-asal-

lavanaikarasatva nidarsanatah.

This Atman-Brahman is causeless and effectless. It is devoid of birth, growth, change, existence, decay and death, the six attributes of objects in this universe. Different from It there is naught anywhere here or hereafter, because everything else other to It cognised or not-cognised is unreal. The empirical universe though seen in the present state of human consciousness, the state of nescience, is non-existent in the pure Consciousness, freed of all relations. Thus instruct the Srutis. A few Mantras which express this conclusion are (i) That Brahman is without cause, without effect, without interior, without exterior; (ii) There is no diversity whatsoever in Brahman; (iii) Everything else other than Brahman is perishable; (iv) That Brahman in which one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, understands nothing else, is infinite and immortal; (v) Just as a lump of salt has neither inside nor outside, is verily one entire mass of saltishness, even so, is Brahman without interior or exterior, an entire whole mass of Knowledge; (vi) That which is finite is mortal; (vii) There is naught higher than or different from Brahman (Brihadaranyaka Upanishad II-5-xix, IV-4-xix, III-4-ii, Chhandogya Upanishad VII-24-i, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad IV-5-xiii, Chhandogya Upanishad VII-24-i and Svetasvatara Upanishad III-9 respectively). These Mantras deny all possible distinction or separateness or otherness in the one non-dual Brahman, resulting in the complete

sublation of the universe seen separate from It. What is the final conclusion of all this? It is the realisation, in the qualified aspirant hearing the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi', from the mouth of his own preceptor, of the identity of the Jiva and Brahman, by the removal of the unreal nescience, even as a drop already remaining as the ocean, realising, as it were, its identity with the ocean.

Section V

EPILOGUE

WHO IS A PERFECTED SAGE?

The readers might not have missed the fact that the Acharya has, in this treatise dealing with the exposition of the essence or cream of the Vedas, covered the prolegomena portion in three verses (2 to 4), and plunged himself right into the subject proper dealing with the mind and ego, discriminating them from the Atman, from the 5th verse onwards. The whole treatise attempts at the sublation of the Manomaya, Vijnanamaya and Anandamaya Kosas, and through it the revelation of the Atman, the Supreme Reality pervading them remains transcending them in its pristine purity, sublime majesty and self-resplendence.

Some Vedantic texts describe the same process using different terminology. They give six stages through which the consciousness rises and call them Drisyanuviddha, Sabdanuviddha, Nirvikalpa, Nissankalpa, Nirvrittika and Nirvasana Samadhis, beyond which is the unrelated Nishpratiyogika Brahman, the Reality-Absolute which transcends human intellect and language. The sages of

liberation or the Mukta Purushas are classified generally into four groups: Brahmavit, Brahmavitvara, Brahmavit-variya, and Brahmavit-varishtha. While all the four are knowers of Brahman, they represent an ascending order of the rise of consciousness, with Varishtha at the topmost beyond which is the Reality-Absolute in its relationless state.

लवणैकरसत्वसमं्णतं,ं
स्वर्वलक्षणवस्तुरून्षेधनतः ।
अवबोधर्नं परमात्मपर्दं,ं
त्वमवेर्ह तर्दस्मं सर्दाहर्मर्त ।। १५७ ।।

Lavanaika-rasatva-samam bhanitam
svavilakshana-vastu-nishedhanatah,
Avabodha-ghanam paramatma-padam
tvam-avehi tad-asmi sadaham-iti.

अणु नो न च तर्िपरीतगुणो,
न च ह्रस्वमतो न दीर्रमर्प ।
प्रर्तर्षद्धसमस्तर्वशेषणकं,
परमक्षरमात्मतयाश्रय ोः ।। १५८ ।।

Anu no na cha tad-viparita-guno
na cha hrisvam-ato na cha dirgham-api,
Pratishiddha-samasta-viseshanakam
param-aksharam-atmatayasraya bhoh.

असुबुर्द्धशरीरगुणान् ंषर्डमा-
नर्ववेर्कजनैदृर्शधमरतया ।
प्रर्तपन्नतमान्प्रर्वहाय शनै-

दृरर्शमात्रमवेर्हं सर्दाहर्मर्तं ।। १५९ ।।

Asu-buddhi-sarira-gunan shad-iman-
aviveki-janair-drisi-dharmataya,
Pratipannataman-pravihaya sanair-
drisimatram-avehi sadaham-iti.

Who is a Jivanmukta, a perfected Sage, Sri Totakacharya says: The Jiva is always of the nature of Supreme Brahman, the Paramatman who, like a lump of salt, is always of the essence of one Consciousness without the least distinction like exterior or interior, who transcends all the universe coming under the realm of cause and effect and who is Consciousness pure, free of all objectivity and subjectivity. A perfected Sage is one who has realised the Truth: "I am that Supreme Brahman". Brahman cannot be said to be either small, or great its opposite and counterpart. Similarly, It is neither short nor long. None of such attributes can be predicated in Brahman. A Sage takes shelter under It and establishes himself in that eternal Reality, the Supreme, the Immortal, free of all particularities, qualifications and attributes. The ignorant due to delusion caused by nescience, superimpose the attributes of hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, and birth and death which really belong to the vital force, mind and the physical body respectively, on the ever pure Atman. One should avoid all of them, and practising slowly, cautiously and intelligently the scripturally ordained Sadhana of 'Neti Neti', negate everything up to and including the Unmanifest, in the universal, and each and every constituent of one's personality up to and including the ego in the individual, and realise: 'I am verily the eternal, ever pure Consciousness'.

अर्हर्नवयनीमर्हरात्मतया,

जगृहे पररमोक्षणतस्तु पुरा ।

पररमुच्यतुतुामुरगः स्वर्बले,

न पुनः समवेक्षत आत्मतया ॥१६० ॥

Ahinirlvayanim-ahir-atmataya,

jagrihe parimokshanatastu pura,

Parimuchyatu tam-uragah sva-bile

na punah samavekshata atmataya.

अर्ववेकत आत्मतया वर्र्दतं,ं

कुशरीरमर्दं ंव्ताप्यर्हवत् ्।

अर्हवत्त्यज र्देहर्ममं त्वमर्प,

प्रर्तपद्य र्चर्दात्कमात्मतया ।।१६१ ।।

Avivekata atmataya viditam

kusariram-idam bhavatapyahivat,

Ahivat-tyaja deham-imam tvam-api

pratipadya chidatmakam-atmataya.

Before casting off its slough, the snake was identifying itself with that slough. But, once it casts the slough off, it ceases to consider it as itself, not even as its own, although it may see it near its burrow. Even so, due to non-discrimination, the aspirant has been mistaking his repulsive and loathsome body for the Self. When through discrimination and the instruction of the preceptor, coupled with the proof furnished by the Srutis and Smritis, he once renounces the body as one among the innumerable objects of not-self and gets a firm conviction on the nature of his real Self, he no more identifies himself with his body, even while he is supposed to be in possession of it. A Jivanmukta, a perfected Sage, as he is

now called, is one who has completely detached oneself from one's body and all the rest of the not-self and attached oneself to the Self, the Atman-Brahman. The BrihadaranyakaUpanishad Mantra IV-4-vii, giving the same analogy of the snakeand its slough, says: "Just as the slough of a snake lies dead andcast off in the ant-hill, so this body is discarded as not-Self by theliberated Sage"

रजनीदिवसौ न रवे्र्वभतः

प्रर्या सततं युतु एष यतः ।

अदववेकदववेकगुण्ुावदि तौ

र्वतो न रवेररव दनत्यदृशेः ।। १६२।।

Rajani-divasau na raver-bhavatah

prabhaya satatam yuta esha yatah,

Aviveka-viveka-gunavapi tau

bhavato na raver-iva nitya-driseh.

पररशुद्धर्वबुद्धर्वमुक्त दृशे-

रर्ववेकर्ववेकर्ववजरनतः ।

मम बन्धर्वमोक्षगुणो व्तो,

न कर्दार्चर्दपीत्यवगच्छ शूम् ्।। १६३ ।।

Parisuddha-vibuddha-vimukta-driser-

aviveka-viveka-vivarjanatah,

Mama bandha-vimoksha-gunau bhavato

na kadachid-apityavagaccha bhrisam.

The Atman is ever free from both ignorance and knowledge. It is the intellect that remains ignorant and becomes illumined subsequently through the implied meaning of the Mahavakya. Every one knows that day and night exist only on the earth due to

its rotation on its axis and that both are absent in the sun which is ever effulgent. Similar is the case with the ego which seems to be ignorant at one time and illumined at another time. The bondage and liberation which are due to ignorance and knowledge respectively, are only for the ego. The ever-effulgent Atman which is pure Consciousness has neither ignorance nor knowledge, and therefore, is free from both bondage and liberation. It is ever free from all kinds of modifications and differences. This is the firm conviction and conclusion of the scripture and the wise Sages who have realised the Truth. This truth is revealed by Sri Totakacharya through the mouth of the preceptor addressing his disciple whose consciousness has risen up to this stage through hearing, reflection and meditation.

न मम ग्रहणोज्झनमर्स्त मया,
न परेण दृशेररर्त र्नर्िनु ोः ।
न र्ह कस्यर्चर्दात्मर्न कमर वे्-
न च कर्िर्र्दहार्स्तमर्दन्य इर्त ।। १६४ ।।

Na mama grahanojjhanam-asti maya
na parena driser-iti nischinu bhoh,
Na hi kasyachid-atmani karma bhaven-
na cha kaschid-ihasti madanya iti.

अहमर्स्म चरर्स्थरर्देहर्धयां,
चररतस्य सर्देक्षक एक इर्त ।
न वे्र्दत एव मर्दन्य इर्त,
त्वमवेर्ह सुमेध इर्दं ंसुदृढम् ्।।१६५ ।।

Aham-asmi chara-sthira-dehadhiyam
charitasya sadekshaka eka iti,

Na bhaved-ata eva madanya iti
tvam-avehi sumedha idam sudridham.

गगनेर्वमले जलर्दार्र्दमले,
सर्त वासर्त वा नर्र्दार्स्त यथा ।
त्वर्य सवरगते पररशुद्धदृशौ,
नर्र्दार्स्त तथायेर्दकृता ।। १६६ ।।

Gagane vimale jaladadi-male
sati vasati va na bhidasti yatha,
Tvayi sarvagate parisuddha-drisau
na bhidasti tatha dvaya-bhedakrita.

अनृतं ियर्मत्यवर्दाम पुरा,
व्यवहारमपेक्ष्य तु गीतर्मर्दम् ।
अनृतेन न सत्यमुपैर्त युजां,
न मरीर्चजलेन नर्दी ह्रर्र्दनी ॥ १६७ ॥

Anritam dvayam-ityavadama pura
vyavaharam-apekshya tu gitam-idam,
Anritena na satyam-upaiti yujam
na marichi-jalena nadi hradini.

बहुनार्र्हतेन र्कमु र्रियते,
शृणु संग्रहमत्र वर्दार्म तव ।
त्वर्य जागररतप्ररूत त्रैतयं,
पररकल्पतर्मत्यसर्देव सर्दा ।। १६८ ।।

Bahunabhihitena kimu kriyate

srinu samgraham-atra vadami tava,
Tvayi jagarita prabhriti tritayam
parikalpitam-ityasad-eva sada.

पररकल्पतर्मत्यसर्र्दत्युरुर्दतं,
मन इत्र्य्शब्र्दतमागमतः ।
उपपत्त्रिव च र्सद्धमतो,
व्तोऽन्यर्दशेषमतूर्मर्त ।। १६९ ।।

Parikalpitam-ityasad-ityuditam
mana ityabhisabditam-agamatah,
Upapattibhir-eva cha siddham-ato
bhavatonyad-asesham-abhutam-iti.

यर्दबाह्यमनन्तरमे करसं,
यर्दकायरमकारणमियकम् ◌्।
यर्दशेषर्वशेषर्वहीनतरं,
दृर्शरूपमनन्तमृतं तर्दर्स ॥ १७० ॥

Yad-abahyam-anantaram-ekarasam
yad-akaryam-akaranam-advayakam,
Yad-asesha visesha vihinataram
drisirupam-anantam-ritam tad-asi.

इयर्देवे मयोपर्नषत्सु पर्द,
परमं वर्र्दतं न ततोऽस्त्यर्धकम् ◌्।
इर्त र्पप्पल्क्षइवाभ्यवर्द-
र्दवर्शष्टमर्तं र्वर्नवारर्यतुमु ◌्।। १७१ ।।

lyad-eva mayopanishatsu padam

paramam viditam na tatostyadhikam,

Iti pippalabhaksha ivabhyavadad-

avasishta-matim vinivarayitum.

The preceptor says to the disciple: "You now remain established in this eternal Reality which is none other than your own Atman, the non-dual Brahman, the cream of all the essence in all the worlds, from the minutest atom and its further sub-divisions up to the heavenly planets in the starry heavens, not only in this Brahmanda but in all the other Brahmandas also which, the scriptures state, are innumerable like the stars in the sky or the particles of sand on the seashore. O my dear son, in the Atman which is pure Consciousness, eternally free, there is nothing to be accepted or rejected". The Pasupata-brahmopanishad proclaims: "In a Knower of Brahman who always sees Brahman alone in all objects and concepts, what can there be to be accepted or rejected?" Acharya Sankara voices the same truth in his Vivekachudamani: "In the great ocean of Brahman filled with the nectar of Immortality and eternal, unintermittent Bliss, what is there to be rejected, what is there to be accepted, what is another and what is different from It". Sage Yajnavalkya in his instructions on Atma-Vidya to his consort Ma treyi, also has declared this truth in similar words: "But when once all has become the Atman, then what should one see by what" (Bri. Up. IV-5-xv) meaning that in that supreme, non-dual Atman-Brahman there is neither the seer, nor the seen, nor the sight. The Divine, the Supreme, the Purushottama who is beyond the Kshara and Akshara, the Uttama Purusha is the Self of everything movable and immovable, the sentient and non-sentient and all that is imaginable and beyond imagination. In this Atman, none can find even a trace of Karma, let him be as wise as Brihaspati, separate and distinct from It. Karma involving the distinction of doer, deed,

instruments, fruits, etc., and causing bondage, are denied in the Jivanmukta. But, others may see him still doing Karmas. Has not Lord Krishna Himself set an example to the world by engaging Himself in all kinds of activities conducive to the welfare of the world! All actions of the Knower of Brahman would be free from the least trace of selfishness, but would be directed towards the welfare of the world, a manifestation of his own Self, the Divinity that pervades every object like the butter in milk, oil in sesame and heat in fire. All acceptance and rejection of Karmas are relevant only in the realm of the not-Atman in the state of ignorance. They have no place at all either in the Atman or in the Jivanmukta who is non-different from the Atman.

"Therefore, O my wise disciple", says the preceptor, "come to the firm conviction: 'I am always the one unchanging, eternal Witness of all the intellects in all beings such as gods, the presiding deities, the celestials as well as demons, the manes and men, birds and beasts, worms and insects and in all the immovables like the plants and trees, the mountains and rivers, the earth and the heaven, the great elements gross and subtle, in short in every thing. I am also the Witness of all the activities brought about by the mind and intellect in all without any exception.'

The great Sage Svetasvatara, having realised the supreme Divine with the help of the power of self-control and concentration of mind and by the grace of the Supreme Itself, instructs the highest order of renunciates, those who have transcended the four orders of life (viz., Brahmacharya, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasa) this Supreme Truth in the following words: "The Supreme Brahman is one only. He is hidden in all beings. He is all-pervading and is the inner Self of all creatures. He presides over all actions and all beings reside in Him. He is the Witness and the Pure Consciousness and He transcends the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas" (Sve. Up. VI-21 and 11). Therefore, O disciple, make

yourself sure that there is nothing here different and apart from your Self, the Witness of all, and which has no real relation whatsoever with the world-phenomena, an unreal superimposition on your Own Self, and hence non-different from It.

The pure sky which is one homogeneous and without parts, is not at all affected by either the presence or absence of clouds which appear in it for a time and disappear subsequently. These clouds do not cause any speciality in the sky which all the time remains pure and unchanged. Even so, in your Self, the all-pervading, extremely pure Witness Consciousness, there is no differentiation caused by duality, a false creation of the unreal Maya. There is, therefore, no difference between the Atman and Brahman which are only two names superimposed on the one, non-dual Reality beyond all names and forms.

This does not mean that the Absolute could accept duality even as an unreal appearance. It has already been stated that duality is only a false superimposition on the only Reality. The teachers and scriptures refer to an unreal duality for the sake of instructing the aspirants entangled in its network of desire, action and result. The duality is subsequently sublated. This is the method adopted even in day-to-day dealings. When one wants to remove a mistaken notion of another, the former accepts for the time being, the latter's erroneous situation, and then slowly brings the latter to the correct position. In the rope-snake analogy, when the man who knows the truth about the snake says 'the snake is a rope', his seeming acceptance of a snake is only for refuting its existence the next moment and instructing about the rope. Similar is the case of the scriptures which make mention of the unreal duality. Out of compassion for the ignorant humanity, the Sruti descends down to their level of objectified Consciousness, accepts the existence of a phenomenal world, and then sublates it with the instruction on the non-dual nature of the Reality. Can untruth have any real existence

in Truth? Never, it is impossible. Darkness cannot remain in light. The waters of a mirage can never add to the depth of a river. When duality is thus transcended, where is the place for non-duality! For, the two are interrelated and interdependent. There is no meaning for 'day' in the absence of 'night'. The term would lose its significance. Hence, in the Reality-Absolute which cannot brook anything other to It, when duality is transcended, non-duality also is transcended. This Atman is Asanga, unattached-says the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad (IV-3-xvi), for It is without parts, without form, without attributes. The Truth is not only in inaction but in action also. It is not only in knowledge but in devotion and sacrifice also. These apparent opposites are not Reality and unreality in perpetual conflict with each other, nor are they two realities, one more real than the other. They are the two sides of the same manifestation of the Reality Absolute.

The preceptor concludes by saying, "O disciple, what you have heard from me so far is sufficient to attain the summum bonum of human life. There is no use of hearing anything more. There is nothing more to know. I shall now sum up what I have said so far: Your Self is real, eternal, free of all relations and ever blissful. The three states of waking, dream and deep sleep are imagined to exist on It, due to superimposition caused by nescience. They, together with all the experiences therein, are therefore unreal. The seeming reality in those states - the presence of the empirical reality in the waking state and the illusory one in the dreaming state and the absence of both in deep sleep state-is due to delusion alone. The Kaivalya Upanishad Mantras 17, 13 and 19 proclaim: "That which manifests the phenomena such as the states of waking, dream, deep sleep, etc.,- 'T' am that Brahman. Realising thus one is liberated from all bonds. What constitutes the enjoyable, enjoyer and enjoyment in the three states-different from them all am I, the Witness, the pure Consciousness, the eternally Auspicious. In Me

alone everything seems to be born, rest and dissolve. 'I' am that Brahman, the second-less". It has been established, through a number of analogies and proofs, that the empirical doer referred to by the term 'mind' in the Vedas and other scriptures, is unreal. This has no real existence apart from the Reality. Therefore, everything distinct from 'You', the pure Consciousness, is non-existent, being a projection of the unreal mind. One should understand this clearly. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says: "When It (the Supreme Self) thinks It is called by the name mind (thinker)" (I-4-vii). Therefore mind is only a name superimposed on the Reality and hence unreal. 'You' are verily Brahman, the pre- supposition of all superimpositions and their substratum.

O my disciple, 'You' are in essence That which has no birth and death, which is unlimited being without distinctions such as interior and exterior, the one quintessence of all essence, and beyond the realm of cause and effect, which transcends the three kinds of differences and thus free from all particularisation, the nature of Consciousness-mass, infinite, immortal, the only true, devoid of all illusion such as the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, devoid of the mind, intellect and ego and their countless ramifications, the Atman, the Supreme beyond the reach of speech and mind. A few Upanishadic declarations supporting this statement are: (i) That Brahman which is without cause, without effect, without interior, without exterior, the Supreme Self which perceives everything. (ii) This Purusha himself becomes self-effulgent. (iii) That which is without distinction such as outside, inside, etc. (Bri. Up. II-5-xix, IV-3-xiv, and III-8-viii, respectively). (iv) He, the Brahman has nothing to achieve for Himself, nor has He any organ of action (Sve. Up. VI. 8). (v) The Brahman is one only and non-dual. (vi) You are That Brahman (Chh. Up. VI-2-i and VI-8-vii). (vii) Brahman is Truth,

Consciousness, Infinity (Tai. Up. II-i). (viii) This Atman is Consciousness, one essence (Nr.U.T.Up. 1).

O disciple, this Supreme Truth is to be known only from the Upanishads which alone expound It. Of all the scriptures, the Upanishads alone deal with It directly. All scriptures other than the Upanishads form, as it were, a commentary and further elucidation of the Upanishadic texts. Sage Yajnavalkya, after answering all the questions of the several learned people in the assembly of king Janaka, puts a counter question to Sakalya: "O Sakalya", asks Yajnavalkya, "I have answered all your questions. Please tell me of that Being who is known only from the Upanishads, who projects the whole universe, withdraws it and also transcends it" (Bri. Up. III-9-xxvi).

In the Prasnopanishad, Sage Pippalada after imparting instructions to the six disciples who approached him for Atma-Jnana, concludes his teachings thus: "O my disciples, I know this Supreme Brahman thus far only. Beyond this, there is nothing to be known". The disciples whose consciousness has not actually risen to those stupendous heights to which the preceptor himself has risen, may after hearing all the instructions, entertain a doubt that there may be something more to hear and to be known. It is to remove this doubt, the above statement has been made by Sage Pippalada.

The Chhandogya Upanishad, through the story of Narada and Sanatkumara, teaches inter alia that before final realisation, the disciple may commit two mistakes. Before the preceptor concludes his instructions, the disciple may, due to ignorance, think that any of the intermediate stages is the final one and may stop further enquiry. Sanatkumara was taking Narada step by step from name, speech, mind, will, intelligence, contemplation, understanding, strength, food, water, fire, ether, memory, aspiration and vital force (Prana). Narada who was enquiring at each step about that which is still higher, stops his further enquiry when he, through

meditation, knows that his Self is identical with the Prana which surpasses all the preceding entities. He seems to be satisfied with this knowledge. The compassionate preceptor Sanatkumara, in order to remove the illusion, urges Narada to enquire further, by telling him: "He really speaks unsurpassingly who speaks unsurpassingly with Truth-Absolute. But one must desire to understand the Truth" (VII-16). Narada, thereafter, resumes his enquiry. The other mistake is that even after hearing the final instruction, the disciple may, due to traces of ignorance left in him, instead of stopping, continue his enquiry. Narada hears the instruction: "Yo vai bhuma tat sukham-That which is Infinite is alone happiness" and asks: "O revered sir, in what is that Infinite established?" (VII-23 and 24-i).

The preceptor says: O my disciple, just as Sage Pippalada said to his disciple, I now tell you that I have imparted to you that Supreme Brahman to be known only from the Upanishads and having heard It you should now realise It, through proper reflection and deep meditation for removing from the mind the obstacles in the form of doubts, wrong understanding and feeling of impossibility. There is nothing more to be known besides this knowledge of Brahman. For, by knowing This you know everything.

One of the great sages by name Saunaka asks his preceptor Sage Angiras: "O great Master, what is That which having been known, all this becomes known" (Mun. Up. I-1-iii) and in reply, the latter explains the highest knowledge of Brahman. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also in the Maitreyi Brahmana in the Yajnavalkya Kanda expressing the same truth says: "When the Atman, my dear Maitreyi, is known through hearing, reflection and deep meditation, all this is known". For, there is really nothing other than the Atman. Hence, when the Atman becomes known, everything becomes known. The intellect which sees differentiation, having merged itself in the Atman, all the objective phenomena disappear

and there remains nothing to be known apart from the Self. This not perceiving anything is not due to the absence of Consciousness, but it is for want of a second thing separate from It. The dualists, it is said, think that this final state of liberation is complete annihilation of oneself. In the phraseology of the Mandukya Karika, the non-discriminating man covers up the Atman, as it were, with the veils of changeability, unchangeability, changeability cum unchangeability, and non-existence, by asserting that the Atman exists, does not exist, exists and at the same time does not exist, and is complete non-existence, respectively, the four alternative theories advanced by them through passion for duality. The Supreme Absolute remains as though hidden to them, hidden by the very theories through which they want to reveal It. He who sees the Supreme Lord untouched by these intellectual idealogies and hypotheses, alone is the Knower. The others who hold on to their petty postulates resulting out of their egoism, are afraid of leaving them. They who believe in duality, who apprehend fear where there is no fear, are afraid of It-says the Mandukya Karika (III-39). 'Dvitiyad-vai bhayam bhaviti - Verily fear arises where there is duality' and 'Anandam brahmano- vidvan na bibheti kadachana- One is never subjected to fear if one knows the Bliss-Brahman' are the bold declarations of the Sruti.

CONCLUSION

The consciousness of a qualified disciple who properly understands the foregoing instructions of the Master, rises to those sublime heights where it is freed of all relationships. The human limited intellect gives place to the divine unlimited Intelligence. The finite merges itself into the Infinite. The river joins the ocean. But a trace of nescience is posited in him, to explain away his future life in the present body and also to satisfy the inquisitive ignorant

who question about his activities during the rest of his life in this world.

इतरोऽर्प गुरुं प्रर्णपत्य जगौ,

ग्वर्न्नर्त तारतवानर्स माम् ॅ।

अवबोधतरेण समिुर्ममं,

मृर्तजन्मजलं सिुरुदु:झिषम् ॅ॥ १७२ ॥

Itaropi gurum pranipatya jagau

bhagavanniti taritavan-asi mam,

Avabodha-tarena samudram-imam

mriti-janma-jalam sukha-duhkha-jhasham.

The disciple now prostrates before the preceptor and says: "O Lord, you have now taken me to the other shore of this great ocean of transmigratory life. In this ocean the waters in the form of the unbroken flow of births and deaths are filled with the whales of pleasure and pain. The boat used to cross over this ocean is Brahma-Vidya- the knowledge of Brahman".

Falling flat at the feet of the preceptor in the act of prostration is symbolic of the complete levelling down to the ground of the ego in the disciple. Egoism being the first ramification of nescience, is the last to disappear with the complete annihilation of its cause. The preceptor who imparts the knowledge of the Supreme is said to be the father of the disciple receiving the knowledge- nay, he is more than the father. For, the father gives only a mortal body and takes care of it till its fall, whereas the preceptor bestows Immortal Existence. "O Lord, you are certainly our Father who has ferried us across the ocean of Ajnana to the other shore of wisdom; salutations again and again to you as well as to the other great Seers" - say Kabandhi and his five co-disciples to their preceptor, Sage Pippalada (Prasna Up. VI-8). The Knowledge of Brahman

reveals itself at the culmination of all spiritual practice, through the grace of God and the Guru who are non-different from the Atman.

After prostrations, the disciple rises up and addresses the preceptor, with a throat choked with extreme devotion, giving expression to his uncontrollable feelings of joy and gratitude:

अधुनाऽस्म्मं सुर्नवृरत आत्मरर्तः,

कृतकृत्य उपेक्षक एकमनाः ।

प्रहसन्र्वषयान् ◌ृ मृग तोयसमान्–ृ

र्वचरार्म महीं व्ता सर्हतः ।। १७३ ।।

Adhunasmi sunirvrita atmaratih

kritakritya upekshaka ekamanah,

Prahasan-vishayan mrigatoya-saman-

vicharami mahim bhavata sahitah.

तव र्दास्यमहं शृमामरणात् ◌ृ

प्रर्तपद्य शरीरधृर्तं ग्वन् ◌ृ।

करवार्ण मया शकनीयर्मर्दं,◌ं

तवकतुरमतोऽन्यर्दशक्यर्मर्त ।।१७४ ।।

Tava dasyam-aham bhrisam-amaranat

pratipadya sarira-dhritim bhagavan,

Karavani maya sakaniyam-idam

tava kartum-atonyad-asakyam-iti.

"O my Lord, I am filled with the supreme Bliss of eternal Peace. I am immersed in the ocean of the Bliss of the Atman. I am completely satisfied with the realisation of the supreme end of human life, the last of the four Purusharthas. My mind is, as it were,

merged in the Reality, and I see the universe as non-different from the Atman. There is nothing here other to the Atman. Anything seen separate from the Atman is unreal like a mirage. I shall wander on the face of this earth along with your worshipful self, my saviour. O Lord, let this body live on the irreducible minimum requirements that come to it without any effort. I shall serve your lotus-feet as much as I can, till the end of my life. What more can I do! O my Master, I can do only so much".

King Janaka also makes a similar complete self-surrender to his preceptor, Sage Yajnavalkya, when he says "O venerable and adored Master, I give the whole dominion of Videha and myself too with it, to attend on you as a servant". A man who has realised the Reality, says the Bhagavad-Gita, rejoices only in the Atman, is satisfied with the Atman, is contented in the Atman, and to him verily there is nothing which remains to be done (III-17). The Mundaka Upanishad describes the highest among the knowers of Brahman as sporting in the Atman, delighting in the Atman and practising Knowledge (III-1-iv). What can be the nature of the thoughts of a liberated soul? The Avadhuta Upanishad (21 and 22) gives the answer: "Being ever of the nature of the Bliss-Atman, what is there, different from me, to experience here! Where is the necessity for practising Samadhi for me who is always established in Self-Consciousness! I am of the nature of eternal satisfaction. All conventional activities whether enjoined or prohibited by the scriptures, do not even touch me, the great Non-doer and Non-enjoyer". The Isavasya Upanishad describes his condition thus: "He sees all beings established in the one, pure, homogeneous Consciousness and sees the Consciousness pervading every being. He has, therefore, neither hatred nor liking for any object".

Such a man of realisation becomes freed of all the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of the scriptures. Does this mean that he would act like a licentious man and engage himself in prohibited activities? Never; he cannot

even dream of such acts. For, even during the period of Sadhana, he has withdrawn himself from all activities, harmful, sinful and tabooed by society and scriptures. How can such a person who, after long and continued practice, has realised the non-dual Atman and who is established in It, be expected to commit a sinful act? It can never happen. It will be a great sin on the part of any even to entertain such thoughts about him.

When one is completely established in the Infinite Supreme Consciousness, to him the universe is no more the former universe of his Sadhana period, full of differentiation, pleasure, pain and misery. It is now one homogeneous mass of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss. It is he himself and he himself is the universe. He may either remain quiescent absorbed in the Transcendental, or engage himself in activity-personal, social, religious or spiritual. It makes no difference to him. Even while acting, he is inactive. He sees inaction in action and action in inaction, in the phraseology of Srimad- Bhagavad-Gita.

He however continues to worship his preceptor, the Vedas and God, so long as there is life in the body. Worship of Vedas, God a Guru is enjoined both before and after realisation-before realisation as a part of spiritual Sadhana, and after realisation, to avoid the sin of ingratitude. "The Advaita, non-dual attitude, is for one's own experience and not for outward show and exhibition in one's day-to-day activities with others. One may practise Advaita in respect of the three worlds, but not to one's own preceptor" - says Acharya Sankara, the greatest exponent of the Advaita philosophy, in his Tattva Bodha.

Liberated souls also move in this world and their body does not fall immediately after realisation. But for this, there would not have been any one to impart the knowledge of the Reality to the ignorant. The long chain of preceptors and disciples beginning from the Lord Himself who is the Preceptor of all preceptors, down

to sages like Vyasa, Vasishtha, Vaisampayana, Yajnavalkya, Suka and others in the Vedic period, and Acharya Sankara, Ramanuja, Madhva, etc., of the recent past and Sri Swami Sivananda, Maharshi Ramana, and other saints and sages of our own days, is ample proof for this fact. All of them have been very active during their sojourn on this earth, more active than many of the busiest amongst us. Take the case of the great incarnations such as Lord Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ and others. All of them, manifesting the transcendental in the immanent, led the divine life for the welfare and uplift of humanity revealing the perfect harmony between the transcendental and the immanent, the Supreme above and the world below. To them, this world with all its sense-objects is not something to be shunned nor one to be hugged to, but it is the manifestation of the supreme Reality, one's own Self which is impossible of either rejection or acceptance. It is very difficult to understand the great Sages and incarnations who are the visible manifestations of the invisible Supreme, much more so to recognise their greatness. Only the wise and the devoted understand the divinity in the incarnations and the great sages. The difficulty is that for all outward appearances they may appear as ordinary human beings like us, and some of their activities also may resemble ours. All outer activities of their physical body do not touch their spirit within. In the cryptic language of the Upanishads, all their actions are no actions. While their body is engaged in the most busy activities, they are really inactive and quiescent; they speak and yet do not speak, they think and still do not think.

This is illustrated by an interesting story in the Gopala Uttara Tapaniya Upanishad. It is said that some of the Gopis in Brindavan, the embodiments of Parabhakti (transcendental devotion) in human form, on one occasion, wanted to carry articles of food to Sage Durvasa who was then staying on the other bank of the river

Yamuna in spate. They consulted Sri Krishna who happened to be near them. He asked them to take to His name. 'If it is a fact that I am an Akhanda Brahmacharin -life-long celibate-the Yamuna is sure to give way' said He. The Gopis with implicit faith obeyed, and they crossed the river without even wetting their feet. After feeding the Sage on the other bank with a sumptuous feast containing a number of delicious dishes, they wanted to return. Again, there was the flooded river before them. Now Sage Durvasa, their honoured guest of the day went to their rescue. He asked them to chant his name and said: 'If it is true that I am an Akhanda Upavasin-one who has been fasting all along without break- the Yamuna would certainly give way'. And so it did, and the Gopis returned to their homes safely, even as they came without touching the waters. Lord Krishna, the Avatara Purusha, the descent of the Supreme transcendental Reality, the consort of sixteen thousand one hundred and eight wives is really in essence an Akhanda Brahmacharin. Similarly, Sage Durvasa, who has ascended to the transcendental heights of the Reality Absolute, though he takes food as any one else and has just finished a sumptuous meal, is really an Akhanda Upavasin. All can become such Akhanda Brahmacharins and Akhanda Upavasins, even while living in this world, by knowing and realising the Reality which, the scriptures say, is as easy as wading a tiny pool of water formed by a cow's hoof, and at the same time, most difficult, next to the impossible -- easy for the aspirants of introverted mind who are discriminating, intelligent and sincere and who are blessed with a wise and compassionate preceptor, and difficult to those whose mind is extroverted and engrossed in the satisfaction of their senses in the sense-world of tantalising tinsels, thinking that they are the only real source of happiness.

The closing five verses, like the beginning three verses, are a direct statement of the Author Sri Totakacharya who has given the

remaining 171 verses forming the main text of the instructions, in the form of a dialogue between the preceptor and disciple. In the traditional manner, this concluding portion deals with the fruit that accrues to one who studies the treatise, those to whom these instructions are to be imparted, and the author's obeisance to his preceptor and the Supreme.

गुरुर्शष्यकथाश्रवणेन मया,

श्रुर् तवच्रर्तसारसमुद्ध रणम् ◌ ।

कृतर्मत्थमवैर्त य एतर्दसौ,

न पतत्युरुदधौ मृर्तजन्मजले ।। १७५ ।।

Guru-sishya-katha-sravanena maya

srutivat-srutisara-samuddharanam,

Kritam-ittham-avaiti ya etad-asau

na patatyudadhau mriti-janma-jale.

The author says that he has heard this discourse about the non-dual nature of the Supreme Reality between the preceptor and disciple, and that only after hearing it he has written the present treatise Sruti-sara-samuddha- ranam-an exposition of the essence of the Vedas, which reveals, as it were, the ever-revealed Reality. The disciple's questions and doubts and their answers, based on logical reasoning, the scriptural texts and direct experience, furnished by the preceptor, says the author, stand on a par with the Vedas in establishing the identity of Jiva with Brahman. The treatise brings out the cream of the Vedas through reasoning supported by analogies and illustrations and the authority of scriptures, even as butter is brought out of curd by churning. A qualified aspirant who studies the treatise and grasps its import, will be saved from this ocean of metempsychoses and will not have to take any more birth in this mortal world. The book may be difficult of grasp to the

unqualified and uninitiated. Aspirants who approach it with unpurified, extroverted mind full of desires for sense-enjoyments and with uncontrolled senses, are likely to miss the path and fail to reach the Goal. The author, therefore, insists on repeated and proper study of the treatise by qualified and sincere aspirants, which will result in the realisation of the Supreme Truth here and now.

ग्वद्भिरदं ंगुरुक्तयुतैः,
परि्तव्यमपि्यमतोऽन्यजनैः
गुरुक्तमतः श्रुतर्ति यतो,
गुरुणोक्तमतोऽन्य ज्न पित् ॥ १७६ ॥

Bhagavadbhir-idam guru-bhakti-yutaih
pathitavyam-apathyam-atonya-janaih,
Guru-bhaktim-atah sruti-bhati yato
gurunoktam-atonya-bhajan-na pathet.

र्नगमोऽर्प च यस्य इर्त प्ररूत-
गुरुक्तमतः कर्थतं गुरुणा ।
प्रर्ति महात्मन इत्यवर्द-
त्परि्तव्यमतो गुरुक्तयुतैुः ।।१७७ ॥

Nigamopi cha yasya-iti-prabhritir-
guru-bhaktimatah kathitam guruna,
Pratibhati mahatmana ityavadat-
pathitavyam-ato guru-bhakti-yutaih.

In addition to the fourfold qualifications, unflinching devotion to one's spiritual preceptor is also insisted for spiritual aspirants, for quick spiritual progress. This subject has already been dealt with in

the prolegomena section. The repetition by the author in this concluding portion, shows its importance in the scheme of spiritual evolution. Some aspirants who have great devotion to God and firm faith in the scriptures, may lack the required intensity in their devotion to their spiritual preceptor. This is caused by their unpurified lower mind which noticing the preceptor's Cheshtas (instinctive activities of the physical body) and finding no difference in them from their own actions, rank him as one among themselves. They fail to understand the real Guru in the personality of the preceptor. This is a great danger in the spiritual path. The Svetasvatara Upanishad states that the ultimate Truth reveals Itself only in that high-souled one who has supreme devotion to his spiritual preceptor. Those who lack this requirement are disqualified to study the Vedantic texts, as this impurity of the intellect would stand in the way of realising the most subtle truths contained therein. The Secret of all secrets remains a secret to such aspirants. Hence, we find great spiritual texts even if made available through printing and free distribution, continue to remain as closed books among the majority. The egoism which persists in the aspirants till they leave back the last rung of the spiritual ladder, is likely to push them down the steps at any moment, unless they are extremely vigilant and watchful at every step. Any slight inadvertence is enough to cause a great and immediate fall, even as a ball dropped unawares at the top-most step of a staircase falls down on the ground in no time. Complete surrender to God and one's own spiritual preceptor who are not really different from one's own Self, can alone save one from such a catastrophe. A fall of the aspirant from spiritual heights is more dangerous and painful than a fall of the physical body from great mountain heights. For, in the latter, harm is caused only to one body, while in the former, it results in suffering in the form of transmigratory life in several bodies.

The scriptures are never tired of insisting on devotion to the spiritual preceptor. The Chhandogya Upanishad says: "A person who has a preceptor knows Brahman" (VI-14-ii). The Tripad-Vibhuti Maha-Narayana Upanishad states: "Just as a born-blind man cannot have any knowledge about colour and form, even so, one cannot get the knowledge of Truth without the instruction of the preceptor even in a crore of Kalpas" (chapter V). The Advaya Taraka Upanishad closes its instructions on the Atman-Brahman with a glorious tribute to the spiritual preceptor.

Even pragmatic knowledge - mere collection of information about the perishable objects of the world, not about their real nature but about their name and form alone - one learns only through a teacher. What to speak of Brahman-Knowledge, the Knowledge of the Reality that is hidden under the names and forms! It can never be had without a preceptor. This has been the experience of those who have successfully treaded the spiritual path. Reason also supports this fact. For, Brahman-Knowledge being beyond the ken of the intellect, one has to depend upon one's own preceptor. The preceptor who is well-versed in the spiritual lore and himself established in the Truth, through a mysterious power, imparts the Knowledge. The Atman alone reveals the Atman to the Atman. An illustration from our daily experience is given by Acharya Suresvara, in his Naishkarmya Siddhi, to show how it is impossible to explain logically the part played by the Mahavakya Tat-tvam-asi' in the revelation of the Reality in the aspirants. A sleeping man is awakened by a mere sound. How the man is awakened cannot be logically explained. One cannot say that the man hears the sound and therefore wakes up, for in the state of deep sleep his organ of hearing, along with the other organs and the mind, is absent having merged itself in its cause, Can one deny that the man does not hear the sound? No, for he could not have woken up without hearing the sound. Thus we cannot say with certainty, that he hears the sound,

nor can we say that he does not hear. This simple fact seems to be a mystery when we try to explain it. The action of the Mahavakya imparted to the disciple by the preceptor, is something similar, says the Acharya, impossible of rational explanation, for it is the realm of the Great Beyond, which is beyond the range of the limited human intellect.

येषां धीसूयरदीप्त्याप्रर्तहतमगमन्नाशमेकांततो मे,

ध्वान्तं स्वांतस्य हेतुजरननमरणसंतानदोलार्धरूढेः ।

येषां पादौ प्रपन्नाः श्रुर्तसर्वनयैर्रूषताः र्शष्यसंर्घाः,

सद्योमुक्ताः स्र्थतास्तन्यर्तवरमर्हतान्यावर्दायुनरमार्म ।।१७८ ।।

Yesham dhi-surya-diptya pratihatam-

agamannasam-ekantato me

Dhvantam svantasya hetur-janana-marana-

santana-doladhirudheh,

Yesham padau prapannah sruti-sama-

vinayair-bhushitah sishya-samghah

Sadyo-muktah sthitastan-yativaramahitan-

yavadayur-namami.

Having given this piece of precept to readers, the spiritual aspirants treading the path, regarding the role of the preceptor in the scheme of Self-realisation and the basic necessity of an attitude of self-surrender to the preceptor, the author himself offers his obeisance to his preceptor, the great Acharya Sankara of world renown, the greatest expounder of the philosophy which goes by the name of Advaita, in beautiful, poetic language, revealing the disciple's absolute self-surrender to the preceptor, the bestower of Immortality. 'O Lord', says the author, 'I have been swaying like a

pendulum in the swing of never-ceasing cycle of births and deaths caused by the beginningless nescience. My head has been reeling due to the sufferings in my innumerable births in all kinds of wombs, high and low. Like children clinging to the swing out of fear of falling, I also have been holding fast to this life of transmigration, mistaking the unreal for the Real, the insentient for Sentience and pain for Bliss. O my saviour, you, the foremost among the wise on the face of this earth, grant Liberation from the thraldom of this phenomenal existence, to your disciples who possess the fourfold qualifications and who surrender themselves to you, by imparting the supreme Knowledge of Atman-Brahman. You have, once for all, destroyed the nescience in my mind, through your instructions, like the effulgent sun doing away with the darkness of night through its rays of light. I offer my prostrations again and again at your holy feet, through my body, organs and mind. O my Lord, you, the greatest of the Paramahamsas are my Saviour. I shall continue to remain at your feet, serving you throughout my life.

ः पादौ यस्य ि चोर्दरमसुरर्नलिन्सूियौ च नेत्रे,
कणारवाशाः शरौद्यौमुरिमर्पर्दहनोयस्य वास्तव्यमर्ब्धः ।
अन्तःस्थं यस्यर्वश्वं सुरनरिगगो ोर्गगन्धवरर्दैत्यैः,
चत्रं रंरम्यते तंकुन्नवपुषं वर्ष्णुमीशंनमार्म ॥ १७९ ।।

To Bhu padau yasya kham chodaram-asur-
anilas-chandra-suryau cha netre
Karnavasah siror-dyaur-mukham-api
dahano yasya vastavyam-abdhih,
Antastham yasya visvam sura-nara-khaga-
go bhogi-gandharva-daityaih

Chitram ramramyate tam tribhuvana

vapusham vishnum-isam namami.

In this closing verse of the book, the author gives expression to his devotion to the Supreme Lord by whose grace alone he has been able to realise Him, the non-dual and yet both the transcendent and immanent, the Noumenon and the phenomenon, the God and the universe, Brahman and the Atman. Just as here in our empirical dealings, our body forms an inseparable part of our personality, even so, in the Absolute, non-dual Whole, the universe forms, as it were, the body of the transcendental true Being, inseparable from It. This is the vision and experience of the liberated soul, a Jivanmukta and a Videhamukta, moving in an individual body which forms a part or a limb of the Virat Purusha, the Lord in the form of this Cosmos. The author concludes his treatise with his adoration to the Supreme. He says: "O Lord, Thou art the all-pervasive Paramesvara, the Supreme Brahman, whose body is this infinite universe. Thy holy feet art this earth and Thy belly is the sky. The vital force in Thee is the air and Thy eyes art the sun and the moon. Thy ears art the directions and Thy head, the heavenly worlds. O most merciful Lord; Thy mouth is fire, Thy kidney is the ocean and inside Thee lie myriads of universes with their infinite number of solar systems. The celestials, human beings, animals, birds, reptiles, semi-divine beings, the demons, in short everything in all the worlds, in space and time and beyond this most marvellous and mysterious phenomena defying all description, which stupefies human intellect, sport themselves, as it were, in Thy bosom. Thou art the Support of all supports in this world. Thou art the pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute. O God of all gods, O Supreme in the form of myself and all, I offer my most humble salutations and adorations at Thy most worshipful feet".

Through this grand awe-inspiring description of the Virat Purusha, the great Sage Totakacharya, brings home to his readers the

significance of the following important Mantra which gives in a nutshell, the essence of all the Upanishads:

ॐ पूणरमर्दः पूणरर्मर्दं ◌ पूणारत्पूणरमुर्दच्यते ।
पूणरस्यपूणरमार्दाय पूणरमेवावर्शष्यते ॥

Om, Purnamadah purnamidam
purnat-purnamudachyate;
Purnasya purnamadaya
purnameva-avasishyate.

ॐ तत्सत् ◌
OM-TAT-SAT

Appendix

TOTAKASHTAKAM

(Octad in Totaka metre by Sri Totakacharya)

तोकाष्टकम् ◌

वर्र्दतार्िलशास्त्रसुधाजलधे
महर्तोपर्नषत्कर्थताथरर्नधे ।
हृर्दये कलये र्वमलं चरणं
व् शङ्करर्देर्शक मे शरणम् ◌॥१ ॥

Viditakhila-sastra-sudha-jaladhe
mahitopanishad-kathitartha-nidhe,
Hridaye kalaye vimalam charanam
bhava sankara desika me saranam.

1. O my revered preceptor, Sri Sankara, the ocean of nectar in the form of Supreme Knowledge in all the scriptures, the expounder of the true import of the Upanishads, may you be my sole refuge.

करुणावरुणालय पालय मां

व्सागररुद्दुःर्विरूदूनहृर्दम् ◌्।

रर्चतारि्लर्दशरनतत्त्वर्वर्दं ◌ं

व् शङ्करर्देशर्क मे शरणम् ◌्॥२

Karuna-varunalaya palaya mam

bhava-sagara-duhkha-vidunahridam,

Rachitakhila-darsana-tattvavidam

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

2. You are the ocean of mercy; kindly protect me who am afflicted by the pains of this transmigratory life. I take refuge in you, O my preceptor, the bestower of auspiciousness who has revealed the truth of all the different philosophical schools.

व्ता जनता सुरि्तार्ि्वता

र्नजबोधर्वचारणचारुमते ।

कलयेऽश्वरजीवर्ववेकर्वर्दं ◌ं

व् शङ्करर्देशर्क मे शरणम् ◌्॥३

Bhavata janata sukhita bhavita

nijabodha-vicharana-charumate,

Kalayesvara-jiva-viveka-vidam

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

3. O my most revered Gurudev who has bestowed true happiness on humanity, who is an adept in the dissertation on Atman-

Knowledge and who has established the identity of Jiva and the Supreme Brahman; may you become my protector.

व् एव व्ानर्तं मे र्नतरां

समजायत चेतर्स कौतुर्कता।

मम वारय मोहमहाजलर्धं ं

व् शङ्करर्देशक मे शरणम् ्॥४ ॥

Bhava eva bhavan-iti me nitaram

samajayata chetasi kautukita,

Mama varaya moha-maha-jaladhim

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

4. By constantly thinking that you are verily Lord Siva Himself, I am filled with the divine Bliss. O my preceptor, the giver of happiness, may you be my haven and may you destroy the ocean of delusion in which I am drowned.

सुकृतेऽर्धकृते बहुधा व्तो

र्वता पर्दर्दशरनलालसता ।

अर्तदीनर्ममं पररपालय मां

व् शङ्करर्देशक मे शरणम् ्॥५ ॥

Sukritedhikrite bahudha bhavato

bhavita pada-darsana-lalasata,

Ati-dinam-imam paripalaya mam

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

5. O my Lord, the bestower of Supreme Peace, it is through numerous meritorious Karmas done by me in ever so many previous births, I have developed a liking for the Darsan of your holy feet. Kindly be you my refuge and save this humble self.

जगतीमर्वतुं कर्लताकृतयो

र्वचरन्र्त महामहसिर्लताः ।

अर्हमांशुरवात्र र्वि्स पुरो

व् शङ्करर्देशक में शरणम् ॥६॥

Jagatim-avitum kalitakritayo

vicharanti mahamahasaschalitah,

Ahimamsur-ivatra vibhasi puro

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

6. Great souls like you move about in this world for the redemption of mankind. You shine like the effulgent sun in front of me. Omy Lord, the destroyer of all evils, be you my sole asylum.

गुरुपुङ्गव पुङ्गवकेतन ते

समतामयतां न ई कोऽर्प सुधीः ।

शरणागतवत्सल तत्त्वर्नधे

व् शङ्करर्देशक मे शरणम् ॥७॥

Gurupungava pungavaketana te

samatam-ayatam nahi kopi sudhih,

Saranagata-vatsala tattvanidhe

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

7. O my Gurudev, Lord Paramesvara, the best among all preceptors, there is no one equal to you in wisdom. You are the befriender of those who take shelter under your lotus-feet. You are the treasure trove of the Supreme Knowledge. Kindly be you my sole refuge.

वर्र्दता न मया वर्शर्दैककला

न च र्कञ्चन काञ्चनमर्स्त गुरो ।

ुतिमेव र्वधेर्ह कृपां सहजां

व् शङ्करर्देशक मे शरणम् ॥८ ॥

Vidita na maya visadaikakala

na cha kinchana kanchanam-asti guro,

Drutam-eva vidhehi kripam sahajam

bhava sankara desika me saranam.

8. So far, O my preceptor, Sri Sankara, I have not been able to find any treasure worthy of possession except you; your very nature is compassion. Therefore be my protector and saviour.

ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ ॐ

Thank You